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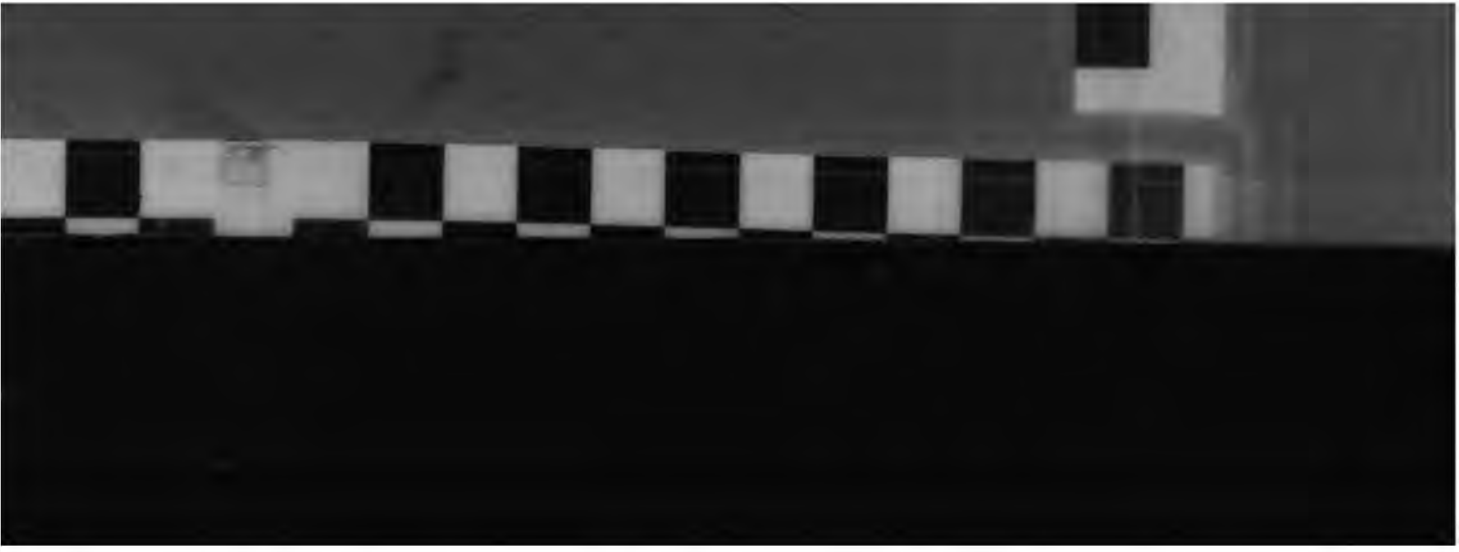

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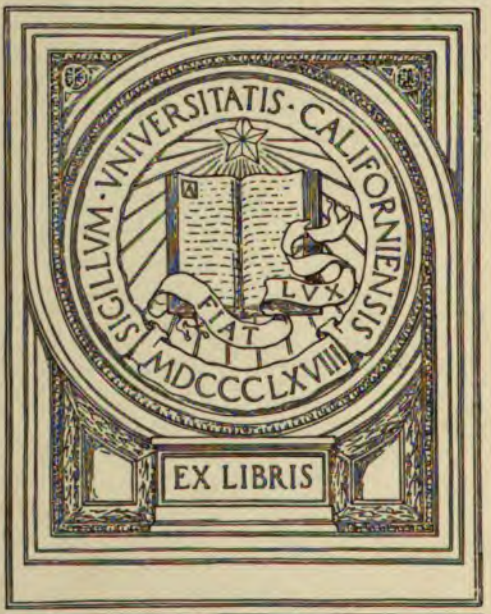

Mrs. Isabella Gustman

From a photograph by Gutekunst

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN:

HER LETTERS AND MEMORIES OF HER LIFE.

EDITED BY HER FRIEND,

EMMA STEBBINS.

"The soul is in her native realm, and it is wider than space, older than time, wide as hope, rich as love. Pusillanimity and fear she refuses with a beautiful scorn. They are not for her who putteth on her coronation robes, and goes through universal love to universal power." — EMERSON.

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TO

THE DRAMATIC PROFESSION,

WHICH MISS CUSHMAN LOVED AND HONORED,

TO WHICH SHE GAVE THE STUDY OF HER LIFE AND THE LOYAL DEVOTION OF HER GREAT POWERS, TO WHICH SHE HAS LEFT IN HER EXAMPLE A NOBLE AND IMPERISHABLE REMEMBRANCE,

This volume is respectfully dedicated.

411445

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

1580. 1835.

Genealogical Sketch of the Cushman Family. Robert Cushman: his Services to the Colony; his Sermon; his Son Thomas Cushman; his Death. — Honorable Mention of Both. — Elkanah Cushman. — The Babbit Family. — Ancestors on the Maternal Side. — The Gift of Imitation hereditary. — Miss Cushman's early Remembrances; early Gifts. — Music a Passion. — First Play. — Sudden Birth of the Dramatic Instinct. —Family Misfortunes. — Study of Music as a Profession. — Practice in Church Choirs. — Introduction to Mrs. Wood. — First Appearance on the Stage as Countess Almaviva. — Goes to New Orleans. — Loss of Voice. — Determination to act. — First Appearance as Lady Macbeth. — Success. — Methods of Study . . . . . 1 - 24

CHAPTER II.

1835 - 1844.

Return to New York. — Engagement to act at the Bowery Theatre. — Illness. — Successful First Appearance. — Burning of the Theatre; Loss of Wardrobe. — Engagement in Albany. — Death of her young Brother. — Engagement at Park Theatre, New York. — Three Years' hard Work as "Walking Lady." — Impressions of her at that Time. — Acting with Macready. — Undertakes Management of Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia. — Dr. Lardner. — Colley Grattan. — Sallie Mercer. — Sails for England. — Goes to Scotland; to Paris. — Makes Engagement to act in London . 25 - 46

CHAPTER III.

1845-1846.

First Appearance in London. — Fazio. — Letters to her Mother. — Great Success. — Social Triumphs. — Newspaper Notices of the Time. — Bianca, Rosalind, Mrs. Haller, Beatrice, etc. — Tour in the Provinces. — Continued Success. — Second Engagement in London. — Romeo and Juliet. — Newspaper Notices. — Letters from Sheridan Knowles. — Dublin Audiences. — Irish Stories 47-67

CHAPTER IV.

1847-1848.

Romeo and Juliet in the Provinces. — Visit to Paris. — Letters of H. F. Chorley. — Macready's Farewell. — The Duke of Devonshire. Letters of Miss Jewsbury. — Her Remembrances. — Miss Cushman's Letters to a Young Friend. — Mrs. Carlyle . . 68-85

CHAPTER V.

1848-1854.

Early Days in England. — A Friend's Memories. — Singing in Society. — Recitations. — Her Sister's Marriage. — Sails for America. — Acts throughout the Country. — Successful Engagements. — Crosses the Ocean to see a sick Friend. — Returns to the States. — Again crosses the Ocean. — Seaforth Hall. — Isle of Wight. — First Visit to Rome. — Page's Portrait. — Paul Akers. — Other Portraits. — Naples. — Florence. — Paris. — Return to England. — Malvern. — Acting in London. — House in Bolton Row. — May-fair Dinner to Ristori. — Miss Cushman's Diary. — Record of 1855-1857. — Second Visit to Rome 86-110

CHAPTER VI.

1858-1859.

Acting in the States. — Return to England. — Summer Excursions. Rome. — 38 Via Gregoriana. — First Evening Reception. — Description of the Roman Home; its Aspect without and within. — The Italian Servants; their Peculiarities. — The Cook. — The

Major domo. — "The Principe." — The Portress. — The Dogs. — The Horses. — The Birds. — The Campagna. — The Aqueducts. — The Rides. — The Hunt. — Shepherd Dogs. — Oxen. — Dangers of the Campagna. — The Spring. — The Flowers. — The Excavations. — New Discoveries. — A Friend's Memories . . 111 - 142

CHAPTER VII.

Miss Cushman behind the Scenes. — The Drama; its Shortcomings; its Excellences; its Opportunities. — Incident in Chicago. — Remembrances of Meg Merrilies; First Assumption of the Part; Mr. Braham; The "Make-up"; The Costume; The Finale. — Demand for the "Sticks." — Disposition of the Reading-Table and Chair. — Nancy Sykes. — Letter on Charity and Actors 143 - 158

CHAPTER VIII.

1859 - 1862.

Death of her Sister. — Excursion in Wales. — Winter in Rome. — Theodore Parker. — Bust modelled. — Sails for New York. — Acts for Dramatic Fund. — Acts in chief Cities. — Visits Mr. Seward in Washington. — Returns to England. — Letters of 1861. — Isle of Wight. — Letters. — Paris. — Visit to Rosa Bonheur's Studio. — French Theatres. — George Sand. — Love for Children. — Letter upon the Sacredness of the Maternal Trust. — Rome and the Roman Climate; Letters on this Subject. — Letters on the Northern Successes. — Return to Rome. — Spezzia. — Mrs. Somerville. — Letters on Religious Subjects . . . . . 159 - 180

CHAPTER IX.

1861 - 1867.

Letters. — Roman Winters. — In 1863 returns to the States to act for the Sanitary Commission. — Acts in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Boston for this Purpose. — Letter to Dr. Bellows; his Reply. — Presentation of Album from Great Central Fair. — Reads the Ode on the Inauguration of the Great Organ in Music Hall, Boston. — Sails for Liverpool. — Rome. — Letters. Excursion to Naples. — Letters. — England. — Harrowgate. — Letters. — Rome. — Letters. — Summoned to England to her Mother's Death-bed. — Presentation of Alti Rilievi to Music Hall, and Description of them . . . . . 181 - 210

CHAPTER X.

Dramatic Readings. Providence: Henry VIII., Macbeth, Hamlet, Cardinal Wolsey. — Humorous Characters in Shakespeare. — Readings: Emotional, Heroic, Humorous, Lyrical. — The Skeleton in Armor. — Battle of Ivry. — Hervé Riel. — Dialect Poems. — Death of the Old Squire. — Burns. — Miss Maloney. — "Betsy and I are out," etc. . . . . 213 - 228

CHAPTER XI.

1869-1874.

First Appearance of the Fatal Malady. — Rome. — Goes to Paris for Advice. —Dr. Sima. — England. — Sir James Paget. — Malvern. Edinburgh. — Sir James Simpson. — Operation decided on; takes place. — Long and serious Illness. — Supposed Recovery. — Returns to Rome. — Reappearance of the Disease. — Returns to England. — Submits to Second Operation. — Recovers for a Time. — Return of Unfavorable Symptoms. — Decides to return to America. — Roman Home broken up. — Builds Villa at Newport. — By Advice of Physicians, returns to the Stage. — Acts in New York; in Boston. — School-house named for her. — Extracts from Letters of these Years. — Acting and Reading in Various Places. — Letters. — Illness in Baltimore . . . . . 229 - 257

CHAPTER XII.

Farewell to the Stage in New York. — The Ovation. — The Ode. — The Speeches. — Letters. — Farewell to Philadelphia. — Readings. — Illness in Cincinnati. — Recovery. — Readings. — Acting in the West. — Illness in St. Louis. — Reading in Philadelphia. — Ristori. — Farewell to Boston . . . . . 258 - 275

CHAPTER XIII.

1875-1876.

Last Winter in Boston. — Courage and Sustainment. — Daily Letters. — Fears and Hopes. — Preparations for Death. — Description of her Surroundings. — Unexpectedness of her Death. — Funeral Ceremonies. — Mount Auburn . . . . . 276 - 286

CHAPTER XIV.

Tributes to her Memory . . . . . 287 - 303

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

PORTRAIT OF MISS CUSHMAN . . . . . *Frontispiece.*

Page

MISS STEBBINS'S BUST OF MISS CUSHMAN 161

MISS CUSHMAN'S VILLA, NEWPORT, R. I. . . . 244

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN:

HER LIFE, LETTERS, AND MEMORIES.

CHAPTER I.

GENEALOGICAL SKETCH OF THE CUSHMAN FAMILY.

"Good name in man or woman
Is the immediate jewel of their souls."
Othello.

THE story of the first settlers of New England — of that small band of devoted men and women who left their native land and subjected themselves with unshaken constancy and courage to the perils and dangers and privations of the wilderness, seeking only the privilege of worshipping God according to their own consciences — is too well known to need much recapitulation here. It is, as it should be, a household word; it is one of the worthiest boasts of the nation, that in this transplantation to the shores of the New World its chief or tap root struck deep down, — the noble and true Puritan element, compounded of the best qualities of any race, — earnestness, sincerity, and thorough conscientiousness.

TO VIEW
ANNOTATIONS

Among the men who first conceived, and afterwards carried out, this plan of emigration to America for conscience' sake, Robert Cushman, the ancestor of Charlotte Cushman, holds an honored and honorable place.

To interpret justly a noble character, it becomes necessary to search out all its springs of action, to follow up and grasp carefully the subtle links which bind it to the past, have swayed it through life, and still stretch onward through influence and example into the illimitable future. The antecedents of such a character as that of Miss Cushman, even as far back as we can trace them, cannot but be of importance and interest, not only to those who loved her as few have ever been loved, but to that large public who knew her only in her work, but over whom she held the sway of a master-spirit, and between whom and herself existed the never-failing attraction of a powerful and magnetic sympathy. I therefore recur briefly to such records as I have at my command concerning the two honorable families from whom she has descended,—the Cushmans and Babbits of New England. Robert Cushman,* the founder of the family in this country, was an Englishman, a Nonconformist or Puritan, one of the original band of Pilgrims, and a trusted and esteemed leader among them, who first emigrated to Leyden, in Holland, "having heard that there they could find freedom of religion for all men." At Leyden, after a peaceful residence of some years, they began to agitate the question of emigration to America, a project in which Robert Cushman took a deep interest. He was selected, in company with Deacon John Carver, to go to England and open negotiations with a company which had been formed under the royal sanction, called the Virginia Company,

* Born 1580 or 1585; exact date not known.

"for liberty to settle on the company's territory in North America." But their chief object, then and always, was to secure from the king the gift of liberty of conscience there. These negotiations did not prove very successful; all the favor they could obtain was the king's gracious permission for them to go, and his promise to *connive* at them, and not molest them; but his public authority, under his seal, could not be granted.

Three journeys from Leyden to England were made on this mission, always urging their great point, "freedom to worship God," and never either dismayed or discouraged by their want of success. At length, finding they could only obtain a sort of compromise, which permitted them, "so long as they remained faithful subjects of his Majesty," to be tolerated in their form of worship, which was nevertheless declared to be essentially unsound and heretical, they finally determined to emigrate without further delay or preamble, and take the future into their own hands. Robert Cushman and Elder Brewster, being then appointed financiers and managers of the affairs of the "Adventurers," as they were called in England, procured for them two ships, the Speedwell, a vessel of only sixty tons burden, and the famous Mayflower, a little larger. These two vessels sailed in company from Southampton on the 5th of August, 1620, Robert Cushman and family sailing with them.

A series of disasters, owing to the unseaworthy condition of the Speedwell, obliged them to put back into port twice, and delayed the final departure until Wednesday, September 6, 1620, when the Mayflower sailed with only a portion of the company, the vessel not being large enough to accommodate them all; among those who remained behind was Robert Cushman, it being considered more important that he should remain, as financier and

agent at Leyden, to look after the interests of the colony, and send them out supplies and necessaries.

During the following year Robert Cushman published an able pamphlet on Emigration to America, urging the advantages of settling in that country, and on the return of the Mayflower, with favorable accounts of the establishment of the colony at New Plymouth he made his arrangements to join them, with others who had been left behind. Early in July he sailed for New England in the Fortune, a small vessel of fifty-five tons, taking with him his only son, Thomas, whom, on his return to England, he left behind him in the family of the first colonial governor, Bradford. He returned, still acting in the interests of the colonists, and before leaving delivered an able sermon or address to the Pilgrims, since quite noted as the first sermon delivered and printed in New England.

On one of Miss Cushman's professional visits to Boston Theodore Parker brought her a copy of this sermon, which was first published in London in 1622, the year after its delivery, and afterwards reprinted in Boston in 1724. Various other editions were printed in 1780, 1815, 1822, and 1826. Mr. Cushman continued to act for the colony up to the time of his death, which took place in April, 1626.

In the records of the colony may be found many evidences of the esteem and consideration in which he was held, and the loss they felt they had sustained in his death. Governor Bradford alludes to him as "the right hand of the Adventurers, who for divers years has managed all our business with them to our great advantage." He is also spoken of by the Hon. John Davis, Judge of the United States District Court of Massachusetts, in a biographical sketch of him, published with an edition of his sermon in 1785, as "one of the most distinguished

characters among the collection of worthies who quitted England on account of their religion, and settled in Leyden in 1609. The news of his death and that of Mr. Robinson, their pastor in the city of Leyden, were brought at the same time to Plymouth by Captain Standish, and they were equally lamented by their bereaved and suffering friends there. He was zealously engaged in the success of the colony, — a man of activity and enterprise, well versed in business, respectable in point of intellectual abilities, well accomplished in Scriptural knowledge, an unaffected professor, and a steady, sincere practiser of religion."

At a later period (1846) Judge Davis remarked in a letter to Charles Ewer, Esq., the publisher of a new edition of Mr. Cushman's sermon: "That discourse is a precious relic of ancient times; the sound good sense, good advice, and pious spirit which it manifests will, it may be hoped, now and in all future time meet with approval and beneficial acceptance in our community." Says the venerable Dr. Dwight, formerly President of Yale College, in a volume of his travels in the United States, published in 1800, "By me the names of Carver, Bradford, Cushman, and Standish will never be forgotten until I lose the power of recollection."

Many other testimonials might be gathered together here, showing the genuine worth of Robert Cushman and the high consideration he enjoyed among his associates; but enough has been said to prove Miss Cushman's right by inheritance to those qualities which lie at the root of all success, and the possession of which her subsequent career so fully exemplified.

It will be remembered that Thomas Cushman, the only son of Robert, remained with the colony when his father returned to England, a member of the family of Gov-

ernor Bradford. About the year 1635, the record says, he married Mary Allerton, the third child of Isaac Allerton, who came over in the Mayflower. In that matrimonial relation they lived together fifty-five years, she surviving him nearly ten years.

In 1649, the office of ruling elder of the church at Plymouth becoming vacant by the death of Elder Brewster, Thomas Cushman was appointed to that office, and continued to hold it to the day of his death, a period of over forty-three years. He was always the intimate and confidential friend of Governor Bradford, and was the principal witness to his will.

The first volume of the Records of the First Church at Plymouth contains the following notice of Elder Cushman's death:—

"1692. It pleased God to seize upon our good Elder, Mr. Thomas Cushman, by sickness, and in this year to take him from us. He was chosen and ordained Elder of this Church, April 6, 1649; he was neare forty-three years in his office; he had bin a rich blessing to this church scores of years; he was grave, sober, holy, and temperate, very studious and solicitous for the peace and prosperity of the Church, and to prevent and heal all breaches. He dyed December 11th, neare the end of the eighty-four yeare of his life. December 16th was kept as a day of humiliation for his death. Much of God's presence went away from this church when this blessed Pillar was removed."

He was buried on the southerly brow of "Burying Hill," in a very beautiful locality, commanding a full view of Plymouth harbor, of the town, of the green hills in the distance, and of the "meeting-house" in which for more than seventy years he had prayed and worshipped. The gravestone erected by Plymouth Church twenty-four years after his death is a plain slab of mica slate

about three and one half feet in height, and was probably imported from England. It is now in a good state of preservation, and although it has stood nearly one hundred and forty years, the inscription is yet distinct and legible. It speaks of him as that "precious servant of God." His widow, Mary Allerton, died at ninety, and was the last survivor of the one hundred who came over in the Mayflower.

In the seventh generation from Robert Cushman — during which long time a succession of Cushmans, all more or less honorable, respectable, and some of them distinguished, lived and died — Elkanah, the father of Charlotte, makes his appearance.

There are five generations of Elkanahs, after Thomas Cushman, all born in Plymouth and Plympton; the first being the second son of the Rev. Isaac Cushman, who was the son of Thomas, and first minister of the Church of Christ at Plympton, as his tombstone records. The fifth Elkanah married Lydia Bradford, who was the great-granddaughter of William Bradford, second Governor of Plymouth Colony. The sixth Elkanah was one of the founders of the old Colony Club in 1769. Isaac Lothrop was President, Thomas Lothrop Secretary, and Elkanah Cushman Steward. He married Mary Lothrop. The seventh Elkanah, born at Plymouth in 1769, married for second wife Mary Eliza Babbit, and was the father of Charlotte Saunders Cushman, who was born in Richmond Street, Boston, July 23, 1816.*

He was the son of poor parents in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Left an orphan at the early age of thirteen, he walked to Boston to seek his fortune, and obtaining

* I am indebted for the foregoing information concerning the Cushman family to a volume of Genealogical Records gathered together by the Hon. Henry W. Cushman, and printed in 1855.

there modest employment, by his industry, probity, and good conduct succeeded in saving a sufficient sum to enable him to enter into business on his own account. He was for some years a successful merchant on Long Wharf, Boston, of the firm of Topliff and Cushman. From time to time he sent ventures to the West Indies, and to the infidelity of those whom he trusted as supercargoes may be mainly attributed his subsequent failure, and the consequent troubles of the family.

Many of Charlotte Cushman's reminiscences of her early childhood bore reference to her father's warehouse, and to her childish happiness when she could escape from home with her brother Charles and enjoy the freedom and delight of the wharves. On one of these occasions fate came within a hair's-breadth of cutting off very prematurely all the promise which lay stored in her childish person. They were amusing themselves by jumping from the wharf to a vessel which lay close alongside in process of loading. After many successful leaps came an unlucky one, which fell short, and Charlotte fell between the vessel and the wharf and sank in the deep waters. An outcry was raised; a passer-by leaped in, rescued the child, and went his way. Charlotte would tell with much humor how she was carried in to her father, and there arrayed in whatever dry garments could be found on the spur of the moment, which proved to be a pair of overalls and a large jacket, called a spencer, which were hurriedly put on her in great trepidation and anxiety. Arrived at home in this guise, she found her mother much more disposed to be severe at her escapade than pitiful over her danger; and nothing saved her from condign punishment but symptoms of illness which followed upon the excitement and exposure. Here the tale seemed ended; but long years after came a sequel in the shape of

a very respectable old gentleman, who asked to see her one day, and modestly informed her that he was the fortunate individual who had plucked her out of the water and saved her for all that had followed, and how honored and delighted he felt in having been the instrument, etc.

The following brief memoranda of the Babbit family, the ancestors of Charlotte Cushman on the maternal side, have been kindly furnished me by Mr. Manning Leonard, of Southbridge, formerly Sturbridge, Massachusetts, the native town of the Babbit family, who has made the collection of these records a labor of love, through the interest he has found in the subject. The first of the family of whom he makes mention is Dr. Erasmus Babbit, the second practising physician in Sturbridge, a very prominent man, of remarkable energy and perseverance. (These two qualities, which were the most marked traits in the character of Charlotte Cushman, have descended to her in a direct line from both sides of her house.) He married, in 1758, Mrs. Mary (Marcy) Remington, a daughter of Colonel Moses Marcy, and widow of Dr. Meshach Remington, the first practising physician in Sturbridge. His second child, Thomas, graduated at Harvard in 1784, studied medicine with Dr. Warren, of Boston, and was the acknowledged head of the profession in New England, and probably on this side the Atlantic.

Erasmus Babbit, Jr., his second son and third child, was born in 1765, graduated at Harvard in 1790, studied law and was admitted to the bar in Worcester in 1793, and married about the same year Mary Saunders, sometimes spelled Sanders, daughter of the Hon. Thomas Saunders, Jr., of Gloucester. (Her mother was Lucy Smith, daughter of Rev. Thomas Smith, a celebrated divine of Falmouth, now Portland, Maine.) This Mary Saunders and

Erasmus Babbit were the maternal grandparents of Charlotte Cushman.

Erasmus Babbit, Jr., was captain of a company in the army quartered at Oxford, 1788–89, under Colonel Nathan Rice, a native of Sturbridge. He is set down as practising law at various places, as having been remarkably fond of music, and having a wonderful memory. It has been said that he could play upon the violin and sing "from sunrise to sunset." As might be presumed, his clients were not numerous and his fees "small."

Their children were:—

Mary Eliza (Charlotte's mother), born in 1793.

Winthrop Gray, born in 1793.

Francis Augustus, born in 1803.

Among the children of Dr. Erasmus Babbit is one named Henry, who died at the early age of twenty-three. He also was a musician, and very much beloved. His funeral is said to have been one of the largest ever attended in the town. An interest attaches to him, from the tradition that Charlotte Saunders, the aunt for whom Charlotte Cushman was named, was engaged to him, and never recovered his loss; as is commonly said, "she never was the same after." She is remembered as a woman of culture and refinement, very modest and retiring, and at times recluse. The oldest memoranda of her I have in my possession consist of a few letters to her "dear Lotty," dated Boston,— sometimes the day of the month, but no year given; upon one of these is a memorandum in Charlotte Cushman's hand: "From my dear Aunt Charlotte, 1846." Whether this is the date of the reception of the letter, or only when the memorandum was made, is not clear; but the latter is most likely, as it is two years after her first journey to England. (This was the last letter Charlotte Cushman received; the news of her death followed.)

These letters are chiefly interesting as showing that even at that early time Charlotte had commenced her career of thoughtful kindness and care of all who had any claim upon her sympathy; they are mostly acknowledgments of little gifts, and it is very evident that already Charlotte is the ruling spirit of the family and the one to whom they all look up; everything depends upon her success, her engagements, which are to benefit the whole. There are allusions to the disasters which befell Mr. Cushman's business. She is evidently suffering from the feebleness incident to declining life; the writing is weak and tremulous; but there are no complaints, only constant references to the blessings she has about her, and a general tone which bespeaks a woman of sound mind and character.

Her sister, Mary Babbit, Jr., as she sometimes wrote her name, was very different; fond of company and "a good time," never discouraged; of wonderful powers of mimicry, she could imitate almost any sound that could be made. Her daughter, Mary Eliza, Charlotte Cushman's mother, was a good singer, a good scholar, and reported the best reader in all that region.

There are only certain brief memoranda from Miss Cushman's own lips taken down at various times during the last few years; alas! too few and brief, for she never could do anything in cold blood; she required the social stimulus, the interest of her listeners, which she never failed to control and retain at her pleasure, and she very soon wearied of mere dictation of facts to an amanuensis; beside that, she took singularly little interest in the idea of posthumous fame or remembrance after her death. She often said sadly, "What is or can be the record of an actress, however famous? They leave nothing behind them but the vaguest of memories. Ask any number of

persons to give you a real picture or positive image of the effect any great actor produced in his time, and they can tell you nothing more than that it was fine, it was grand, it was overwhelming; but ask them how did he do such or such a thing, how did he render such a passage? describe his manner, his gesture, even his personal appearance, that we may have a living picture of him, — and they are at once at a loss. It is all gone; passed away. Now, other artists — poets, painters, sculptors, musicians — produce something which lives after them and enshrines their memories in positive evidences of their divine mission; but we, — we strut and fret our hour upon the stage, and then the curtain falls and all is darkness and silence."

Much might be said in answer to this: her whole life and the honors which have been paid her, the position she has taken in the mind and heart of her generation, are sufficient to show that, like all true workers and noble souls, she had a mission to fulfil much higher and broader than she ever realized. She "builded better than she knew"; and the foundation she laid and the edifice she erected stands strong and firm, a beacon and an emblem, lighting and guiding many steps through the tangled and dangerous paths of the profession she loved and honored.

The precious memoranda of Charlotte Cushman's earliest days in Boston open with the following sentence: "I was born a tomboy." In those days this epithet, "tomboy," was applied to all little girls who showed the least tendency toward thinking and acting for themselves. It was the advance-guard of that army of opprobrious epithets which has since been lavished so freely upon the pioneers of woman's advancement and for a long time the ugly little phrase had power to keep the dangerous feminine element within what was considered to be the due bounds

of propriety and decorum. Things which now any young girl can do as freely as her brother, many of the games which were considered strictly and exclusively masculine, are now open to both sexes alike, to the manifest benefit of the limbs, muscles, and general development of the future mothers of the race.

But how many years of prejudice have had to be slowly undermined and done away before this good could be accomplished, and how much the unwise restraint must have pressed upon this great, strong, free nature, is evidenced by the fact that it is the first thought with which she begins her reminiscences: "I was born a tomboy. My earliest recollections are of dolls' heads ruthlessly cracked open to see what they were thinking about; I was possessed with the idea that dolls could and did think. I had no faculty for making dolls' clothes. [The needle was never a favorite implement with Charlotte Cushman throughout her career.] But their furniture I could make skilfully. I could do anything with tools." This was so true, that it was often said of her, in after years, she possessed the germs and capabilities of almost any pursuit within her, and would have been successful in any direction to which she had turned her large capacity and her indomitable will. "Climbing trees," she continues, "was an absolute passion; nothing pleased me so much as to take refuge in the top of the tallest tree when affairs below waxed troubled or insecure. I was very destructive to toys and clothes, tyrannical to brothers and sister, but very social and a great favorite with other children. *Imitation* was a prevailing trait."

This faculty, which lay at the foundation of all her subsequent career, was so instinctive with her that she exercised it almost unconsciously, and even in those early days, as the following example will show:—

"On one occasion, when Henry Ware, pastor of the old Boston Meeting-House, was taking tea with my mother, he sat at table talking, with his chin resting in his two hands, and his elbows on the table, I was suddenly startled by my mother exclaiming, 'Charlotte, take your elbows off the table and your chin out of your hands; it is not a pretty position for a young lady!' I was sitting in exact imitation of the parson, even assuming the expression of his face."*

Referring again to this imitative faculty, Charlotte says:—

"Beside singing everything, I exercised my imitative powers in all directions, and often found myself instinctively mimicking the tones, movements, and expression of those about me. I 'm afraid I was what the French call 'un enfant terrible,'—in the vernacular, an awful child! full of irresistible life and impulsive will; living fully in the present, looking neither before nor after; as ready to execute as to conceive; full of imagination,—a faculty too often thwarted and warped by the fears of parents and friends that it means insincerity and falsehood, when it is in reality but the spontaneous exercise of faculties as yet unknown even to the possessor, and misunderstood by those so-called trainers of infancy.

"This imitative faculty in especial I inherited from my grandmother Babbit, born Mary Saunders, of Gloucester, Cape Ann; afterward the wife of Erasmus Babbit, a lawyer of Sturbridge, Massachusetts; through whom I am connected with Governor Marcy's family, the Sargents, the Winthrops, the Saunders, and Saltonstalls of Salem, and other well-known families. My grandmother's faculty of imitation was very remarkable. I remember sitting at her feet on a little stool and hearing her sing a song of the period, in which she

* This Mr. Ware was intimate in the family, and seems to have exercised a powerful influence over Charlotte. There is a monody, written by her upon his death, which must have been a very early production, and is a very creditable one. Emerson was a colleague of Mr. Ware in his church, and taught the Sunday-school classes.

delighted me by the most perfect imitation of every creature belonging to the farmyard."

This especial gift of imitating the creatures Miss Cushman herself possessed to a remarkable extent. She could at any time set the table in a roar by the most vivid representation of a hen pursued and finally caught, or of the strange, weird, mistrustful behavior of a parrot. This last was inimitable.

Of her grandmother she says: —

"She was also remarkably clever, bright, and witty, and so dominated her household and children that, although the qualities descended, her immediate family had little opportunity to exercise them in her presence. My mother was this lady's only daughter, and I inherited from her the voice which was at first so remarkable and which was the origin of my introduction to the stage. She sang all the songs of the time with good voice and taste, and I learned to love music in the truest way at a mother's side.

"My uncle, Augustus Babbit, who led a seafaring life and was lost at sea, took great interest in me; he offered me prizes for proficiency in my studies, especially music and writing. He first took me to the theatre on one of his return voyages, which was always a holiday time for me. My first play was 'Coriolanus,' with Macready, and my second 'The Gamester,' with Cooper and Mrs. Powell as Mr. and Mrs. Beverley. All the English actors and actresses of that time were of the Siddons and Kemble school, and I cannot but think these early impressions must have been powerful toward the formation of a style of acting afterward slowly eliminated through the various stages of my artistic career.

"My uncle had great taste and love for the dramatic profession, and became acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. William Pelby, for whom the original Tremont Theatre was built. My uncle being one of the stockholders, through him my mother became acquainted with these people, and thus we

had many opportunities of seeing and knowing something of the fraternity.

"About this time I became noted in school as a reader, where before I had only been remarkable for my arithmetic, the medal for which could never be taken from me. I remember on one occasion reading a scene from Howard Payne's tragedy of "Brutus," in which Brutus speaks, and the immediate result was my elevation to the head of the class, to the evident disgust of my competitors, who grumbled out, 'No wonder she can read, she goes to the theatre!' I had been before this very shy and reserved, not to say stupid, about reading in school, afraid of the sound of my own voice, and very unwilling to trust it; but the greater familiarity with the theatre seemed suddenly to unloose my tongue, and give birth as it were to a faculty which has been the ruling passion ever since."

I may fittingly insert here portions of a letter I have received from a friend of her childhood, which refers to these days. She says: —

"I have only delayed answering your letter that I might obtain for you one special word of the beloved friend, addressed to my brother, which dwells in my mind as a valuable expression of hers. My brother tries as yet in vain to find it; but he will, if you wish, gather up what he may recall of it and send it to you through me, or not, as you please. It was some comment on Salvini and his acting of Othello (with a charge to us to see him in Florence), and some criticism on the play, on the drama, and on acting in general, with deductions out of her own experience. I remember how it showed the keen insight of her alert, original, sincere mind, and the grand force of the woman who, conquering her work, had freed herself from the conventions and traditional judgments of the stage; and I think that, in her private and individual relations, her friends took that same impression of her as of a grand soul having conquered life and itself, so that she might

fairly exercise the right to do as she pleased, — to be her own gracious, individual self. It was that spontaneity in a woman of the world that held its unfailing charm over men of the world and over multitudes of young women, which made them kneel to her.

"I shall never forget our first meeting after many years of absence. It followed the English period of her career, when she had attained to a world-wide reputation and that social prestige which wealth and character cannot fail to command. We sought her, and at last met face to face the old schoolmate. There was the same uncalculating, fresh, frank face; the same merry, clear blue eye, but without the long, flowing, yellow locks to cast back in haste from their obtrusive sweep; the same bold tread, now become regal. She seated herself in front of me, holding both my hands in the sincere grasp of hers, while she went back over the times when, as she said, we were boys together, albeit I had no such penchant for a masculine masquerade as she, with the glory of her Romeo behind her, might reasonably entertain. She recalled with the greatest zest, and laughter long and loud, an earlier stage début than the world had seen, when, in our school-days, her mother, my eldest sister, and perhaps one or two of our neighbors, made up the audience to our first represenation of the operetta of Bluebeard, in the large attic chamber of her mother's house. This was before the days of popular private theatricals, and marks the mind to dare and do at that early age. Fatima and Irene have gone to their graves before her. I was Abomelique. She, with her then good voice, which afterward became such a rich and wonderful contralto, was the lover, Selim. Even now I seem to hear the cheering song of the young soldier, in his white Turkish trousers, close jacket, red sash, wooden scimetar, and straight red feather, which, if not that of the Orient Turk, was of the Western Continentals, as, mounted on some vantage-ground, a chair, or wooden steps perhaps, he bravely sang out loud and clear, —

'Fatima, Fatima, Selim 's here!'

Then in her mind and mine the scene was shifted, the vision faded, and we looked on through a few years to the trial scenes of her musical training, her efforts, her discouragements, still holding her aims high spite of all resistance, till the voice broke and the musical career was ended. Others have told me an incident belonging to those times. A testimonial concert or entertainment had been given to 'Old Father Mallet,' as he was familiarly known, who had been at some time her teacher. It proved for those days a large and hearty demonstration, and the old man wept like a child over it. The heart of the young girl was touched; and — the feet never in fear or shame afraid to follow the impulse of the heart — she went to him, putting her hand on his head as he sat, and soothed and comforted him effectually.

"That she kept the sweet beneficent nature which, wherever her home was, over all the world, made for courtesy and kindness, you know better than I do. Yet with all this natural humaneness, which amid prosperity and admiration is so hard to hold, she also kept, as it seemed to me to her latest years, her sweetness of temper. That she could frown and look dark as night I doubt not, though I never saw it, not even on one occasion, which might have justified some chagrin, when she had been brought before an irresponsive because mediocre audience. As she regained the anteroom, the weary fall of the head on the shoulder of a friend, with the exclamation, 'O, I am dead and buried!' betrayed the sensitiveness of the spirit free from all anger or fault-finding.

"But it is time that I call to mind this was meant to be a letter in which I should tell you I have neither data nor any continuous recollection of the beloved friend: I have only some notes of such graceful expression as to charm me into reading and re-reading. There is only the continuity of love, a line stretching under the silent years when no sign was made; brought up later to the surface of our lives, and flashing and irradiating my memory, electrifying my heart at every touch which relates to her.

"H. W."

To return to Miss Cushman's recollections: —

"Then came the circumstances in my father's life which made it necessary that his children should be placed under conditions looking toward their future self-support. Reverses in business obliged us to remove from Boston to Charlestown, and I was placed at a public school.

"I only remained at school until I was thirteen years of age; the necessities of the family obliged us to take early advantage of every opportunity for self-sustainment, and my remarkable voice seemed to point plainly in that direction. My mother, at great self-sacrifice, gave me what opportunities for instruction she could obtain for me, and then my father's friend, Mr. R. D. Shepherd, of Shepherdstown, Virginia, gave me two years of the best culture that could be obtained in Boston at that time, under John Paddon, an English organist and teacher of singing, the principal teacher of his time. This was the foundation of my after success, — or rather of my after opportunity, — for it put me in the way of it, and even through failure became the foundation of all my success in my profession.

"There was at this time in Boston a rather remarkable family of the name of Woodward. The daughters of this family sang in all the different Unitarian churches; one of them, Anne Woodward, was the soprano in Henry Ware's church. Rebecca, a sister, sang at Dr. Palfrey's, in Brattle Street; and Dorcas, another, afterwards married to George Andrews, the comedian, sang at Dr. Pierpont's, in Hollis Street. They were friends of my mother, and through and with them I sang in these various choirs. But before this, and before I had received instruction from Paddon, I should mention that in my mother's efforts to advance me, and procure me musical advantages, she had gone to see an old acquaintance of my father's, a retired sea-captain, who had invested his savings in a piano-forte factory, and amused and occupied his leisure by presiding himself over the establishment. His foreman was a man by the name of Chickering,

the founder of the great business which is now so famous all over the world.

"He invited me to come there to practise, and afterward procured me instruction from a protégé of his by the name of Fauner; and it was here that I obtained my first real knowledge of the science of music. The name of this good sea-captain was John Mackey, afterward of the firm of Chickering and Mackey, but then associated with Mr. Babcock in piano-forte manufacture.

"When Mrs. Wood came to sing first in Boston, the theatres gave only five representations in the week. They were not licensed for the Saturday night, and that evening was usually devoted to concerts. On one of these occasions, a piano being wanted, they came to select one at my practising establishment, and while there inquiries were made for a contralto singer to sing one or two duets with Mrs. Wood. Captain Mackey, always good and kind, spoke of me, and I was sent for to go up to the hotel and give a specimen of my powers before Mrs. Wood. The voice was a very remarkable one: it had almost two registers, a full contralto and almost a full soprano, but the low voice was the natural one.

"It was at the Tremont House. Mrs. Wood received me very kindly, and I rehearsed with her, 'As it fell upon a day.' She seemed to be much impressed by the voice, for she immediately sent up stairs to ask Mr. Wood to come down. He came, and I sang again, and at the end of the duet they both seemed much pleased, and both assured me that such a voice properly cultivated would lead me to any height of fortune I coveted. After this first essay of my voice Mrs. Wood was always very kind to me, and I became her constant attendant in her walks; she talked to me much of the pity it would be to waste my voice in mere teaching, and influenced greatly my determination to cultivate it for the stage."

The impression Charlotte Cushman had made upon Mrs. Wood and the interest she took in her I find indicated in one only letter from her, which has by some

accident been preserved. It is a yellow, time-stained document, much worn at the edges and corners, as if its youthful recipient had carried it long about with her in her pocket, which I have no doubt she did; for all her life long her friendships were of the nature of passions, and she seems to have taken heartily and kindly to Mrs. Wood. The letter is not dated, that is, the year is not given, — a very troublesome omission in most of these old letters; but it must have been in 1835 or 1836.

"My dear Charlotte: Allow me in the first place to thank you for your truly kind and most welcome letter, and also to offer you *many* apologies for my delay in writing in answer to it. I have been but poorly since I arrived in New York. It does not agree with me so well as *dear Boston*. We had a *most tedious voyage*, and only arrived here on Monday morning, the day on which we were to appear at the Park. The performance was changed, for I was too much fatigued to sing. On Wednesday, however, we commenced our labors. Everything went off extremely well, but the house was *thin*. On Thursday they came out *very well* to "Cinderella," and gave *plenty* of applause. I know it will give you pleasure to hear that Talma [the dog] is in great health and spirits; he behaved himself in the most *discreet* manner on board the boat, and was admired *beyond everything*.

"I am *sure*, my dear Charlotte, that I need not tell you how I miss you, and how happy I shall be to see you again, and trust you will follow my advice by practising *steadily*, so as to be prepared for me when that time arrives, as I am most *anxious* for your success. This, I fear, is but a poor epistle; but you will excuse it when I tell you that I am a poor correspondent, being always so taken up with my profession. However, this you *must* believe, that I am your truly affectionate and *sincere* friend,

"Mary Anne Wood."

Below is written, "Not one bouquet of flowers since I came here; alas!" And a faint memorandum in pencil

on the outside says, "Received the 23d of January. The happiest moment of my life was while reading this letter."

"After this [referring to the first interview mentioned above] I sang with Mrs. Wood on two occasions at her concerts, and it was through her influence that I became an articled pupil to James G. Maeder, who had come out with them from Europe as their musical director, afterwards the husband of Clara Fisher. Under his instruction I made my first appearance at the Tremont Theatre in the part of the Countess Almaviva, in the 'Marriage of Figaro.' It was considered a great success. My second appearance was as Lucy Bertram in 'Guy Mannering.'

"With the Maeders I went to New Orleans, and sang until, owing perhaps to my youth, to change of climate, or to a too great strain upon the upper register of my voice, which, as his wife's voice was a contralto, it was more to Mr. Maeder's interest to use, than the lower one, I found my voice suddenly failing me. In my unhappiness I went to ask counsel and advice of Mr. Caldwell, the manager of the chief New Orleans theatre. He at once said to me, 'You ought to be an actress, and not a singer.' He advised me to study some parts, and presented me to Mr. Barton, the tragedian of the theatre, whom he asked to hear me, and to take an interest in me.

"He was very kind, as indeed they both were; and Mr. Barton, after a short time, was sufficiently impressed with my powers to propose to Mr. Caldwell that I should act Lady Macbeth to his 'Macbeth,' on the occasion of his (Barton's) benefit. Upon this it was decided that I should give up singing and take to acting. My contract with Mr. Maeder was annulled, it being the end of the season. So enraptured was I with the idea of acting this part, and so fearful of anything preventing me, that I did not tell the manager I had no dresses, until it was too late for me to be prevented from acting it; and the day before the performance, after rehearsal,

I told him. He immediately sat down and wrote a note of introduction for me to the tragedienne of the French Theatre, which then employed some of the best among French artists for its company. This note was to ask her to help me to costumes for the rôle of Lady Macbeth. I was a tall, thin, lanky girl at that time, about five feet six inches in height. The Frenchwoman, Madame Closel, was a short, fat person of not more than four feet ten inches, her waist full twice the size of mine, with a very large bust; but her shape did not prevent her being a very great actress. The ludicrousness of her clothes being made to fit me struck her at once. She roared with laughter; but she was very good-natured, saw my distress, and set to work to see how she could help it. By dint of piecing out the skirt of one dress it was made to answer for an underskirt, and then another dress was taken in in every direction to do duty as an overdress, and so make up the costume. And thus I essayed for the first time the part of Lady Macbeth, fortunately to the satisfaction of the audience, the manager, and all the members of the company."

It is to be much regretted that we have not any analysis by Charlotte Cushman herself how far and in what way this early conception of the character of Lady Macbeth differed from her more mature realization of it. It would be extremely interesting. But it is to be doubted whether it did differ materially. She grasped at once and with singular consistency and force the idea of whatever she had to represent, and, once seized, she identified herself with the conception in a way to make it unchangeably her own. It has been much dwelt upon in the many short biographies and notices of her which have been published from time to time, that she was a laborious student, and that it was by hard work she achieved her great success in her profession. To a certain extent, so far as untiring devotion, love, and unity of purpose go, this is true; but not at all true in the commonly accepted

idea of study. Her powers were wonderfully instinctive and spontaneous. She never had to look over an old part, in the sense of study, before acting it, even after a very long interval. When it was something entirely new, as, for instance, when the scene in "Henry VIII." between Queen Katharine and the two cardinals was introduced, which she had not been in the habit of acting, it became necessary for her to study it.

The method in this instance was as follows: A speech would be read over aloud to her, quite slowly and distinctly; then she would repeat what she could of it. Then another reading and another repetition. The third time was generally enough. Then the next speech would be taken up in the same way, and so on. There was apparently no labor, and passages so acquired remained stored up as it were in her mind, ready, when called for, at a moment's notice. Beyond the due expression and feeling given to the words, which she could never wholly omit even in study or at rehearsal, the acting was left to the inspiration of the time and place.

CHAPTER II.

"Let 's carry with us ears and eyes for the time,
And hearts for the event."

Coriolanus.

"If it be now,
'T is not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now;
If it be not now, yet it will come; the readiness is all."

Hamlet.

THIS successful performance of Lady Macbeth, at her age, was surely a most noticeable incident, and a remarkable introduction to the stage. She struck at once, with characteristic daring, at the very heights of her profession; and although circumstances and the hard necessities of life afterwards compelled her to take lower paths and climb upward painfully, yet she struck here the keynote of her possibilities, and knew to what she must ultimately attain. Friends will remember, who have heard her tell of the difficulties she surmounted to reach that place from which in her thoughts and dreams she never afterwards descended, which was to her the goal of all her ambitions. Her circumstances were no doubt poor enough. She had no place for study, and she used to resort to the garret of the house she boarded in, and sit there on the floor, committing to memory the parts to which she aspired and dreaming out the methods of their realization. One can well imagine how the impetus of this remarkable success, following upon the

bitter disappointment in her voice, carried back the *debutante* with renewed hope and energy toward home again.

"The season being at an end," she resumes, "I took passage in a sailing-vessel for Philadelphia on my way to New York. In those days travelling was a very different and much more tedious affair than it is now. Arrived in New York, I addressed a note to Mr. Simpson, manager of the Park Theatre, asking him for an engagement. He offered me a trial. While debating upon this, which seemed to my young imagination a great slight, coming fresh from my triumph in Lady Macbeth, I received a call one day from Mr. Thomas Hamblin, manager of the Bowery Theatre, then a very successful man. He was very kind; he said that his friend, Mr. Barton, had arrived from New Orleans, and had told him a great deal about me; he should very much like to see me rehearse, and assured me if it was like what his friend had informed him of, he would make as great a success for me as he had done for another actress, a Miss Vincent, who was a great favorite.

"This, of course, fired my imagination and soothed the feelings which Mr. Simpson had wounded by asking me to act on trial. I was then too much of a child to understand the advantage of having even an inferior place at the Park Theatre, where there was at that time an excellent school for acting in a famous company, over a first-class position in a second-class theatre. So I acceded to Mr. Hamblin's wish. He heard me rehearse scenes from Lady Macbeth, Jane Shore, Belvidera, Mrs. Haller, etc., expressed himself satisfied, and entered into a contract with me for a three years' engagement, at a salary to increase ten dollars a week each year, commencing at twenty-five dollars.

"I had no wardrobe for these characters, and it was decided my engagement should commence as soon as these could be prepared. Not having the means to procure this wardrobe, Mr. Hamblin arranged for me, with people from whom he bought goods for his theatre, that I should be supplied with

whatever was necessary. He would become responsible for the debt, and deduct five dollars a week from my salary to meet it. Seeing thus an independence before me, I hastened at once to relieve my mother from her position in Boston, where she was keeping a boarding-house, which, with four children to support, may be imagined had not been very profitable. She made all her arrangements, broke up her house, and came to me. I got a situation for my eldest brother in a store in New York. I left my only sister in charge of a half-sister in Boston, and took my youngest brother with me.

"One week before the engagement for which I was announced in New York, I was one day suddenly seized with chills and fever, caused by getting overheated in a walk at Harlem. For three weeks I was very seriously ill with rheumatic fever, which finally succumbed to what was then a novelty in New York, — medicated vapor baths. One week after the first application of this I was acting. But three weeks of the four which had been devoted to the commencement of my first engagement were exhausted, and other novelties to be produced at a particular date left me only one week to make my New York impression, for I was to act but four weeks in New York, and then be sent elsewhere. Weak as I was from my illness, that impression might very easily have been impaired; but I succeeded beyond my expectations and those of my manager. During that week I acted Lady Macbeth (to Mr. Hamblin's "Macbeth,") Jane Shore, and Mrs. Haller. But the reaction from this first week was naturally very great. I was again in bed from excessive weakness. My wardrobe, which I felt did not properly belong to me until I had paid for it, I left in the theatre until such time as I should again need it. The piece produced the week after mine was "Lafitte," and on the first or second night of it the Bowery Theatre was burned to the ground, with all my wardrobe, all my debt upon it, and my three years' contract ending in smoke!

"In my miserable position, with all the dependants then upon me, I sent for the manager of a little theatre called the

Chatham in New York, and also of the principal theatre in Albany, conducted at that time by Mr. W. R. Blake as stage manager. I asked him for an engagement in Albany, where I could at the same time get practice and be sufficiently near to New York that if an opening came I might take advantage of it.

"He gave me an engagement for five weeks, to which I proceeded immediately, accompanied by my mother and younger brother, which latter I placed at school. During this engagement I became a great favorite. At the hotel where we lived there also boarded a number of the members of the State Senate and House of Representatives. I became acquainted with many of them, who were very kind to me. It became known that Governor Marcy was a cousin of my mother. He was a man held in high estimation, and this fact may have bettered my position socially, though he was then Senator at Washington. It had been jokingly remarked often that more of the members of both houses could be found at my benefit than at the Capitol.

"There I remained five months, acting all the principal characters, at the end of which time I lost my young brother by a sad accident, which event made a very serious mark upon my life; most of the enthusiasm and ambition, which had been a most marked trait, seemed suddenly checked. I had less to work for, and I determined then, that, knowing very little of my art as art, I would seek to place myself in a position where I could learn it thoroughly. I became aware that one could never sail a ship by entering at the cabin windows; he must serve, and learn his trade before the mast. This was the way that I would henceforth learn mine."

The young brother, of whom mention has been made above, whose sudden loss affected her so deeply, seems to have been very dear to her, and some school-boy letters of his which have been preserved show that the affection was mutual. The letters are carefully dated, which is

more than old heads did in those days. They begin, "My darling sister"; sometimes "darling" is not enough, and he puts "Dear, darling sister," and there is frankness and manliness in the tone of them and in the large, bold school-boy hand. "Tell Charley to come and see me," he says, "tell Susy to come too, and you come, and mother, then there will be a good load of you"; and in another, "O, how I wish I could see you before you go to New York. *Do* come up. I hope Charley will come, I am *so* anxious to see him; bless his old heart!" It is clear that he is of her kind, and possessed also the love principle largely developed. Among the papers is one wherein he is showing his penmanship by striking off, in grand style, the names of all the different members of the family; an extra amount of flourish and grander style attests the value he sets upon the name of the beloved sister. Sallie Mercer, Miss Cushman's faithful maid, bears witness to her high estimate of this young brother, and the hopes she cherished for his future career. He gave promise of genius of a high order, and his death was a blow from which she never quite recovered. He was killed by a fall from a horse she had given him. The jacket he wore at the time was always preserved, and went with them from place to place through all her wanderings.

After this event she wrote to Mr. Simpson of the Park Theatre, New York, asking him for any opening there might be; and the position of "walking lady," vacated by the secession of the pretty Mrs. Garner, and "general utility business" was offered her at twenty dollars a week.

"During the summer of that year," she resumes, "I made a little excursion to Buffalo and Detroit, on a starring engagement. There, at the house of the then Governor of Michigan, Stephen Y. Mason, I became acquainted with Captain Mar-

ryatt, the author, whose friendship I enjoyed from that time for the remainder of his life. Returning to New York, in due time I commenced my engagement at the Park Theatre, which lasted for three years, — from September, 1837, to June, 1840."

Of this time there are but scanty records, and scarcely any letters have been preserved. We only know that it was a time of hard work, of ceaseless activity, and of hard-won and scantily accorded appreciation. From a very poor publication, called "Records of the New York Stage," I find notes of her various performances, wherein one is most struck by the uncommon versatility of her powers, and the continual alternation all along the scale of character,

"From grave to gay, from lively to severe."

These were the days of intense study and hard practice, when it was the custom of the theatres to change the plays every night; to think that the public must have perpetual novelty; when two plays, often three, were given on the same evening, and long runs were unknown. But these trying days afterwards bore excellent fruit, and culminated in the finished artist.

From a remarkably well-written letter by a stranger, an Englishman, which I find in a Boston paper of the year 1863, this time is thus alluded to: —

"I saw Charlotte Cushman act in Boston for her benefit a short time before her first departure for Europe. The audience was not generously large; indeed, I might say it was ungenerously small, and not a few in it were foreigners. This was not as it should be. Macready had a succession of crowded audiences, and in private life he was welcomed, feasted, and fêted. Miss Cushman supported him brilliantly, loyally, sympathetically, and thus contributed much to his

eminent success. He acted to the last available hour, and the morning of the date which was appointed for Miss Cushman's benefit he sailed for England. There may have been inevitable reasons for this, which may have justified it to Miss Cushman herself; but upon her friends it left a very unpleasant impression. Miss Cushman belonged to Boston by birth, kindred, education; and Boston should have bidden her Godspeed in 'a bumper.' But we have changed all that, and Boston has often made ample amends for this casual neglect of her native artist. I could not help feeling the contrast the other evening between 'now and then.'"

The letter is written on the occasion of Miss Cushman's performance in Boston for the benefit of the Sanitary Commission, for which purpose she had come all the way from Rome. If there were space, I should like to make longer extracts from this letter; but this particular passage I cannot omit. Speaking of the impression she made on him when he first saw her, which was many years before at the Park Theatre, the writer says:—

"In one of my evening rambles about the city I found myself passing the Park Theatre, and I was moved to go in. There was little, I confess, in outward appearance that was cheerful or exciting. The scenery was poor, tawdry, and inappropriate, the lights were dim, and the audience not large. The play was 'Othello,' and on the whole the performance was spiritless. In the part of Emilia I saw a large-sized, fair-complexioned young woman, not of handsome, but of impressive presence. The effect of her denunciation of the Moor after the murder of Desdemona was electric. The few lines of high passion which the part contains, by the power with which the actress delivered them, made the part, insignificant though it is, the leading one on that occasion. By looking at the bill I found the name of this actress was Charlotte Cushman. She was rapturously applauded, and this was the

only hearty applause that was given during the evening. I knew that there was no ordinary artist in this then comparatively unknown young woman. I saw her next in Lady Macbeth, and my conviction was only the more confirmed by this terrible test of any genius. I went away filled with admiration, resolved to see this powerful actress as often as I should have the opportunity. I then foresaw her fame, and time has justified my prophecy. I saw her frequently afterward, when she played with Mr. Macready, and even with this great and cultivated artist she held her own. She had not had his experience, but she had genius. There were times when she more than rivalled him; when in truth she made him play second. I observed this in New York, and a critic in the Times bore witness to it in London. I have seen her throw such energy, physical and mental, into her performance, as to weaken for the time the impression of Mr. Macready's magnificent acting. She profited no doubt by his admirable ability and veteran experience, but she nevertheless always preserved her own independence and thorough individuality.

"Sometimes the intensity with which her acting affected me also vexed me. 'The Stranger' and 'Fazio' are both plays that I could never see for their own sakes; but I have been so moved by Miss Cushman's Mrs. Haller and Bianca, that I have gone home ill from the effect of the acting. I was unutterably ashamed of myself, to be so prostrated by compositions of such spasmodic melodrama and such maudlin sentimentalism; but the artist created the tragedy in her own person, and that which was frigid in the book became pathetic in the woman. The same was the case with Mrs. Siddons; some of her most overpowering acting was in very inferior plays."

From a note to her mother, dated "New York," I glean the following reference to her first performance at the Park Theatre with Mr. Macready. "In great haste I write only a few words, with a promise to write again to-

night after the play, and tell you all particulars of my great and triumphant success of last night, of my reception, of being called out after the play, and hats and handkerchiefs waved to me, flowers sent to me, etc."

In the winter of 1842 she undertook the management of the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, at that time much run down, and it was lifted from its low condition by her spirited and clever management. She was a great favorite, and the theatre recovered its popularity. Among the company we find the names of Chippendale, Fredericks, Wheatley, Alexina Fisher, the three sisters Vallée, — one of them afterwards Mrs. De Bar, — her sister Susan Cushman, etc. She was herself, of course, the leading personage of the theatre, and acted all her at that time immense *repertoire*. With characteristic decision, however, she did not hesitate, when Mr. Macready came, and she saw the opportunity for study and improvement in his company, to give up her position of management for the purpose of acting with him, and underwent the enormous fatigue of acting alternate nights between New York and Philadelphia for the term of his engagement in New York.

During the year 1842 there are letters passing between her and Dr. Lardner, who was then on a lecturing tour in the United States, on the subject of the proper lighting and ventilating of the theatre, showing a thoughtfulness on these subjects at that early time most striking and unusual. He is evidently full of appreciation of her ability and capacity, and avails himself of it thankfully with reference to his own affairs in the country.

I find also letters under this date from Mr. Colley Grattan, British Consul at Boston, an early and warm friend, who afterwards furnished her with letters of introduction to England. One of these letters alludes to the

play of "The-Bear Hunter," which is probably his play, and which Miss Cushman had produced at her theatre. He says, "I would give much to see you *look* Aline, though there is nothing in the words of the part worthy of you."

Another letter from him alludes to some cloud of discouragement which seems to have passed over her, and he says: "You talk of quitting the profession in a year. I expect to see you stand very high indeed in it by that time. You must neither write nor think nor speak in the mood that beset you three days ago. I have no doubt the cloud has passed over, and that the fine sunshine and bracing air of this very day are warming and animating you to the 'top of your bent.' (I wanted two or three words to finish the sentence, and as usual found them in Shakespeare.)"

Again he says, in reference to the same letter: "Are you not yourself tinged perhaps by the sensitiveness (to give it no harsher name, which is, after all, the true one) so common to the profession? Beware, not of jealousy, for I am sure *you* are above its reach, but of over-anxiety to please those whom the ardor of your temperament leads you to overestimate."

These are marvellously true words, and show deep insight into character. All her life long Charlotte Cushman suffered from this "ardent anxiety," her warm, true heart prompting always her active, impetuous temperament to acts of kindness, not always estimated at their true value. There are people so coldly constituted that they shut themselves up against demonstration, as if it were something false, something to be guarded against, and the warm glow which emanates from an earnest, loving nature beats upon them in vain. The worse for them! The coldness which they summon up to repel the angels of this life strikes inward, and dulls all that

is best worth having in this life and in that which comes after.

In another letter of this period Mr. Grattan says: —

"I am sincerely glad you have made up your mind to go to England next summer. It must do you infinite good if you go there in a mood of true philosophy, not expecting too much, and resolved not to be discouraged if things fall short of your hopes. Remember that this country must be the field of your permanent exertions. England will be only a training-ground, where you cannot avoid learning much that will be valuable to you. I hope we shall have plenty of time to talk the whole matter over and over. As to the offer from the London Theatre you speak of, you must consider it well before you make any pledge that would be binding. Be very cautious in writing. I would by all means advise your playing first in Liverpool, Manchester, and perhaps in Dublin. It would accustom you to John Bull and Paddy Bull audiences, and give you confidence in yourself.*

"There is very much on this subject which I shall be anxious to say to you. I feel a deep anxiety for your welfare. I hope you will continue to dream 'horrid dreams about me,' as long as they go by *contrairies*. But let your waking thoughts be sure to remind you of me as I am.

"Faithfully and cordially your friend."

In another letter, writing from Boston, he says: —

"The theatre has been very well attended here. Mr. Vandenhoff is greatly admired. I wish to God you were not tied to your own stage. But I am rejoiced to hear on all hands how well you are doing, and that you and your sister are such favorites in Philadelphia. I hope I may be able to go and see you in the early part of next year. Pray write to me soon and fully about your prosperity, for that is what I like to hear of. Believe me, as I know you do,

"Yours with great truth and regard."

* Mr. Grattan must have been astonished at the manner in which she took both of these bulls by the horns.

It is to be deeply regretted that Miss Cushman's own letters, to which these are answers, have not been preserved; in every step of this undertaking I have reason to deplore the want of foresight which has permitted such wholesale destruction of these valuable letters.

From later notes, under date London, 1859, which I may as well insert here, to preserve the sequence of this correspondence, I find the following, referring to the death of her sister Susan:—

"I cannot resist the wish to write you a few lines, not merely because it is usual from true and cordial friendship on such occasions, but because I do think you will be pleased to know that I am always deeply interested in whatever concerns you, and anxious you should know also that neither time nor absence nor distance, those fatal foes to intimate communication, can alter my long and faithful affection. I am deeply grieved at the loss you now suffer under, and very, very sorry on my own account. I greatly admired and esteemed your sister. I heard the sad news even before the papers had announced it, from your most worthy and attached friends, the B——s. This sad loss, so unexpected and so severe, must draw closer to you all to whom you have been attached by ties of family affection, or by the sympathy of friendship. It is well that you have so many duties to perform, such a warm heart and clear head to sustain you under such a heavy trial."

Referring to his book on America, he says:—

"One word about my book, to which you allude. I quite forgot its existence when I was writing to you. I know there is no one who would more cordially testify to much of its truth than you would. But still, you are American, with a keen sense of national feeling, as you ought to be, and there are pictures in it that might not please you; so I should prefer your being content with the extracts sent you, without

risking the possibility of disapproving the work and blaming the author and your true friend, "T. C. G.'

It was about this time that Miss Cushman's well-known maid, Sallie, became a part of her family, — I might well say a part of herself, for she always called her "her right hand." Any memorial would be incomplete which would leave out the friend and companion of all her wanderings, the sharer of her trials and her triumphs, the good, devoted, faithful Sallie Mercer. She came into these close relations with her mistress very early, when she was but fourteen years of age. Miss Cushman was struck by her serious, steady ways, her anxious forehead, but especially by her eyebrows; she believed in what she called "conscientious eyebrows," and Sallie's were so peculiar in that way, that one of our merry habituées in Rome used to say, "I am always in expectation of seeing Sallie's eyebrows go over the top of her head." There was some difficulty in taking her away from her mother, who also had her ideas of the child's value; but it was one of the things fated to be, and so was finally accomplished. From that time the two were never separated, except for the necessity or pleasure of Miss Cushman. Sallie never had any will, any love, any desire, apart from her and her interests. Perhaps there never has been a more perfect instance of absolute devotion on the one side, and appreciation and trust on the other, than this association presented.

With all this entire self-abnegation, Sallie was by no means wanting in character; she had a really superior administrative faculty, an unceasing, loving conscientiousness in all her duties, which no temptation ever biased. Temptation, indeed! Sallie did not know the word and its power; to her there was but one law, duty, — duty in

all her relations, but first and chiefest her duty to "Miss Charlotte." Wherever she was, duty had to be the supreme law, and she was rigid and inexorable against all the little relaxations and loose-endednesses which make of service in our day so much of a lip and eye contract. She, like her mistress, always exercised a sort of natural supremacy. In her department she reigned, and it was edifying to hear her address the other servants, often much older than herself, as "my child."

Sallie's "good sense" also was conspicuous; her rule, though rigid, was just and kindly; true as steel to her class, she never, though much noticed and highly esteemed by all Miss Cushman's friends, was known to overstep the boundary of her position. Add to this that she had excellent tastes, loved reading, and always carried about with her her favorite books. Her memory was a distinguishing attribute; she knew all Miss Cushman's parts so well, that she could act the part of prompter upon occasion. Miss Cushman tells of an instance when, through some most unusual cause, for a moment the words of her part failed her; they were gone as if they had never been. The prompter, seldom needed by her, was off his post. Moving across the scene to cover her momentary perplexity, her eye fell on Sallie at the side scene, who, comprehending the situation at once, supplied the missing link, and she went on.

Sallie was the only "dresser" she ever had; the guardian and custodian of all her theatrical properties. She knew, to *a pin*, whatever was necessary to each costume, and, no matter how many were the changes, nothing was ever missing. Long experience had made the routine absolutely perfect, relieving her mistress of all care upon the subject. Afterwards, when the pressure of slow-wearing disease came, what tongue or pen could ever do justice

to the unfailing, untiring travail of heart and hand in the service of the beloved and worshipped mistress!

In travelling, also, Sallie was invaluable. She was in all respects a skilful courier, and those who were so happy as to journey under her convoy and that of Miss Cushman never knew the inconveniences and annoyances so apt to beset travellers. But Sallie had a universal genius: in travelling, she was courier; when resting, she was maid, nurse, purveyor, general providence; when settled down for a season, she was housekeeper; always the one who knew where everything was, who kept a watchful eye over all. The Italian servants looked upon her as a sort of *Deus ex machina*, and believed in her powers and resources with an almost superstitious trust. Her store-closet was supposed to contain inexhaustible treasures; nothing could be asked for in the house, but the answer was sure to be, "Cui dentro," — in here, — pointing to Sallie's closet, which at last came to be called "cui dentro" by all the house. As my object is to give as nearly as possible a picture of Miss Cushman's life and surroundings under all their varied aspects, I make no apology for giving place to this sketch of her favorite servant.

On October 26, 1844, she sailed for England in the packet-ship Garrick. Her finances, when she made up her mind to try this English venture, were not very flourishing. As we have seen, her last benefit in Boston did not help her much. She was obliged to make arrangements for the maintenance of her family during her absence, and with characteristic prudence she took care that a sufficient sum should be left intact to enable her to return home in case of failure. It will be seen she did not "burn her ships." A short pencil diary kept on board ship, and which was the last effort of the kind she ever made, — for her life in

England very soon became too full to allow the time for any such expression, — shows that with all her courage and decision there were also feelings of deep despondency at the bottom of her heart; doubts and fears which only herself knew about, and the expression of which in these pencillings gives a touching clew to what must have been her early struggles in England before she achieved her recognition.

"How little," she writes, "do we estimate our good gifts of fortune till we are deprived of them! And this, though worn out and stale as a proverb, comes upon me with full force at this time. When desponding, I repent that I have left my home. I reproach myself that I was not content with moderate competency, while in its enjoyment, but must thrust myself out from the delight which I was permitted to enjoy, for this miserable, frightful uncertainty, this lingering doubt, which at last may lead to disappointment."

She contrasts the sea voyage of 1844 with that of 1836, and says, of the two, that of 1844 will remain much longer and more strongly impressed upon her memory. "I am eight years older," she says, "than when I went to sea last; and while I have my senses, I think I will never go again after I once more return to my own land." She became so familiar with the sea in after years, that she crossed the Atlantic upwards of sixteen times.

But the voyage passes, as all disagreeable things do, with days of misery and discouragement, fast yielding toward the last to better influences as health returns and the mercurial, hopeful temperament gets the mastery; but there is much more looking back than forward. The ties of family and friendship — always strong as death with Charlotte Cushman — draw her powerfully backward, and the diary is full of the tenderest thoughts and fancies over

the dear ones left behind. She finds friends on board, however, who were afterwards tried and true to the last. If ever any one had a specialty for making and keeping friends, she had; the friends of her early days were those of her later years, and nothing but their own unworthiness ever lost them a place once won in her regard. This does not mean that her nature was facile in accepting friends or intimates. She had a keen insight into the basis of character, and was not deceived by the glitter of false metal. Although her profession, by bringing her into contact with all sorts of people, obliged her to associate with them for a time, no unworthy soul ever made a lodgement. When the time came, they were as inevitably shed off from her as muddy water glides over without soiling the snowy plumage of the swan. So it was with regard to mere conventional standards in her estimate of people. Her range of sympathy covered the highest and the lowest alike, and both alike found no difference in the sweet and gracious character of her reception of them; and although she estimated at its full value the greatness of eminent station and of intellectual and artistic achievement, and knew how to give honor where honor was due, yet she had a still warmer corner in her large heart for the unobtrusive merit of genuine worth, even when it came to her in the humblest guise.

She alludes to one of the friends made on board the Garrick as a very religious person, of the Presbyterian persuasion, and mentions a remark made by her of which she says, "I am uncertain whether she means it as a compliment, but she says she thought that people in my profession were very different from what she finds me to be." This suggests another reflection with regard to her, which is, that no one ever seemed to feel any antagonism with her on religious subjects; she was always sincerely

religious without cant or pretension, and she had a reverent sympathy for all forms of belief, which enabled her to worship as devoutly under the dome of a Roman Catholic cathedral as in the simplest and barest of tabernacles. In either, her grand, earnest voice would roll out its sincere cadences with entire and absolute faith that it is out of the heart of the worshippers, and not through the form of the worship, that the acceptable incense rises up to the Father of us all. The grand simplicity of her nature was nowhere shown more fully than in this; she could meet all professors alike on their own ground, where there was sincerity of conviction, and never failed to interest and attract them.

To return to the voyage. As the days pass on, the natural reaction of her active, energetic spirit towards the future rather than the past takes place, and we find reflections as to the possibility of a longer stay than the six months she had laid out for herself. "If I act," she says, "I will not go home until I succeed as they would have me. Longer than I have promised myself will seem an age, but I must have patience."

On Saturday, 15th, they sighted land. She says:—

"I look upon it with such different feelings from the other passengers. I would freely give up the privilege of stepping upon this *terra incognita*, if I could turn round and go straight back again. At home in three weeks! Instead of joy, a feeling of profound sadness presses upon my heart, and I find myself unconsciously shedding tears at my lonely situation. I am indeed a stranger, and I feel it. My only hope can be that I may not long feel it so. If I do, it will break my heart. The morning is thick and miserable, and as we get nearer the land the fog is more dense. The English on board are smacking their lips as if they recognized the taste of their own native air, off here three hundred miles from their homes. I

can well understand the feeling, for if I were within one thousand miles of Philadelphia, I am sure I should imagine I could scent Philadelphia air. They tell me this is a fair specimen of English weather. Good heavens! what a state of density to live in!"

On another page of the diary I find copied the well-known passage from Longfellow's "Hyperion": —

"Look not mournfully into the past; it comes not back again. Wisely improve the present, it is thine. Go forth into the shadowy future, without fear, and with a manly heart."

And these lines from Browning's "Paracelsus," which seem to throw a vivid light upon the workings of her mind at that time: —

"What though
It be so? — if indeed the strong desire
Eclipse the aim in me? — if splendor break
Upon the outset of my path alone,
And duskest shade succeed? What fairer seal
Shall I require to my authentic mission
Than this fierce energy? — this instinct striving
Because its nature is to strive? — enticed
By the security of no broad course,
With no success forever in its eyes!
How know I else such glorious fate my own,
But in the restless, irresistible force
That works within me? Is it for human will
To institute such impulses — still less
To disregard their promptings? What should I
Do, kept among you all; your loves, your cares,
Your life, — all to be mine? Be sure that God
Ne'er dooms to waste the strength he deigns impart!
Ask the gier-eagle why she stoops at once
Into the vast and unexplored abyss;
What full-grown power informs her from the first,
Why she not marvels, strenuously beating
The silent, boundless regions of the sky!"

The passage, —

"Be sure that God
Ne'er dooms to waste the strength he deigns impart!"

was always a favorite quotation with her.

The vessel arrived in Liverpool Monday, November 18, 1844. After a week's rest she went with the fellow-passengers mentioned above on a short excursion into Scotland. In a letter written after her return she refers to this trip.

"Having so agreeable an opportunity to go with these kind friends, I thought in case anything happened that I should *not* go to Scotland to act, it would be a pity to take such a long voyage and see nothing of Edinburgh; so I e'en started, and have been through Scotland and seen everything worth seeing. My letters of introduction took me among the most delightful people I ever met in my life. They treated me like a princess."

It may not be inappropriate to note here how wise and judicious this movement was. The journey into Scotland, though it might seem something of an extravagance to one who was obliged then to count every penny, was yet the most sensible thing she could do, to obtain a proper reaction after the long and dreary voyage, and the deep depression which had overwhelmed her in parting with her family and launching herself alone upon the world. It took her through the most charming parts of England and brought her into contact with kindly and appreciative people, who were not slow to discover the unusual quality and promise of their visitor. Beside restoring the tone of her mind, it aided in the restoration of her health, and prepared her to meet the arduous labors which were before her. Afterwards it was extremely characteristic that, instead of sitting down and eating her own heart in suspense and anxiety in her dull lodgings

in Covent Garden, she boldly dashed over to Paris, and for ten days put herself in the way of seeing all that the French stage could offer of best and most finished in her profession, — a great treat to her, no doubt, and one which, coming upon the fresh soil of her mind, made an ineffaceable and powerful impression.

On her first arrival in England she had found a letter awaiting her from Mr. Macready, proposing to her to act with a company which was being organized in Paris, of which himself and Miss Faucit formed a part. She tells in another place how she came to reject this proposition. In Paris she was again approached on the subject. Some misunderstanding had arisen between Miss Faucit and the management, and they came to Miss Cushman to see if she would be willing to step into the vacant place. She conceived the idea at once that, by establishing so early in her career anything like a rivalry with the — at that time — favorite actress of England, she might possibly prejudice her chances in that country. Suddenly making up her mind to place herself out of reach of influence or temptation by a judicious retreat, she returned to London, and there in her humble lodgings awaited her destiny. Of this time of suspense and anxiety, before her great success, Miss Cushman was fond of talking in after years. She was never ashamed of her struggles or her poverty, and would tell with a certain pride, as contrasting with the position she afterwards achieved for herself, of her straitened housekeeping, and with no little amusement of Sallie's careful economies, and how they both rejoiced over an invitation to dinner, of which before long she had abundance and to spare. Sallie says, "Miss Cushman lived on a mutton-chop a day, and I always bought the baker's dozen of muffins for the sake of the extra one, and we ate them all, no matter how stale they were; and

we never suffered from want of appetite in those days." Sallie always said those early days were the happiest they had.

Meantime she was active and busy, taking what steps she could toward obtaining the much-desired opportunity, not easy to secure upon her own conditions, unheralded and comparatively unknown as she was, and hedged about by untold difficulties and rivalries and vexations.

In the midst of it all she never abated one jot of her determination to take a high place or none, not even when she found herself reduced to her last sovereign, as she was when Maddox, the manager of the Princess Theatre, at last came to her. He was reported by the watchful Sallie as walking up and down the street, early one morning, too early for a visit. "He is anxious," said Miss Cushman; "I can make my own terms." And so it proved. He wanted her to act with Forrest, then about to make his début before a London audience. She was not willing to appear first in a secondary part, and stipulated that she should have her opportunity first and alone then, if she succeeded she would be willing to act with Forrest. So it was settled; she made her impression, and carried her point. This was the turning-point in her career,—"The tide which taken at the flood leads on to fortune." It was not money she sought, but *recognition;* and she entered upon her first London engagement, for a limited number of nights, at seven pounds a night.

CHAPTER III.

"Nothing becomes him ill,
That he would well."
Love's Labor Lost.

"You have deserved
High commendation, true applause, and love."
As You Like It.

AFTER much difficulty in procuring a suitable person to act with her, she made her first appearance as Bianca in Milman's tragedy of "Fazio," February 14, 1845.

From letters to her mother, written immediately after her arrival in England, I make the following extracts. In describing her voyage, she mentions this incident:—

"On the morning of the 8th I came near being washed overboard. I was sitting on deck during the squalls, holding on by the back of the settee, when a squall struck us, and washed *seat and me* and two sailors entirely over to the other side of the ship, and but for the rolling up of that side we should have gone over. I never was so frightened in my life, nor, even when overboard off Long Wharf, more wet. I thought for a moment that I was indeed gone. However, fortune favors the brave, and I was picked up the most dripping young woman you ever saw. . . . . I found, on arriving at the hotel, that Macready had sent down from London three times to see if I had arrived. I have in all about seventy letters of introduction, and I suppose I may make some friends; but, as it is, I feel most miserable and lonely."

Another letter, under date December 2d, refers to her excursion into Scotland, and adds:—

"By the by, did I tell you Macready had written to me, and there was a letter awaiting me on my arrival, telling me he wanted me to come to Paris? I hardly knew what to do, but wrote to Barton, who advised me; so I sent word *I could not come.* He wrote back; got annoyed. I replied; and last Saturday I received a letter quite ill-tempered, saying I was taking an irrevocable step. On Sunday morning down came a gentleman from London *to persuade me;* but 'while the father softened the governor was fixed,' and he went back to London."

A letter of March 2d, 1845, speaks of her great success in London with justifiable exultation.

"By the packet of the 10th I wrote you a few lines and sent a lot of newspapers, which could tell you in so much better language than I could of my brilliant and triumphant success in London. I can say no more to you than this: that it is far, far beyond my most *sanguine expectations.* In my most ambitious moments I never dreamed of the success which has awaited me and crowned every effort I have made. To you I should not hesitate to tell *all* my grief and all my failure if it had been such, for no one could have felt more with me and for me. Why, then, should I hesitate (unless through a fear that I might seem egotistical) to tell you all my triumphs, all my success? Suffice it, *all my successes put together since I have been upon the stage* would not come near my success in London; and I only wanted some one of you here to enjoy it with me, to make it complete."

In the next letter, dated March 28th, we see she is reaping the full measure of her success, not only publicly, but socially.

"I have been so crowded with company," she says, "since I have acted, that upon my word and honor I am almost sick

of it. Invitations pour in for every night that I do not act, and all the day I have a steady stream of callers; so that it has become among my more particular friends a joke that I am never with less than six people in the room; and I am so tired when it comes time for me to go to the theatre that Sallie has to hold my cup of tea for me to drink it.

"It seems almost exaggerated, this account; but indeed you would laugh if you could see the way in which I am besieged, and if you could see the heaps of complimentary letters and notes you would be amused. All this, as you may imagine, reconciles me more to England, and now I think I might be willing to stay longer. If my family were only with me, I think I could be content. Sergeant Talfourd has promised to write a play for me by next year. I have played Bianca four times, Emilia twice, Lady Macbeth six times, Mrs. Haller five, and Rosalind five, in five weeks. I am sitting to five artists. So you may see I am very busy. I hesitate to write even to you the agreeable and complimentary things that are said and done to me here, for it looks monstrously like boasting. I like you to know it, but I hate to tell it to you myself."

A friend writes under date of May 12, 1845:—

"I found Charlotte looking well, but complaining of fatigue; she is surrounded by friends who seem to consider her the *beau ideal* of everything that is great. Sergeant Talfourd yesterday, in pleading a case for Mr. Maddox, took occasion to eulogize her in the most extraordinary manner, called her the second Siddons, etc., and praised her to the skies, when it was totally uncalled for. It is really unprecedented. The papers continue to speak of her in the most extreme terms of praise, and for the present she is the greatest creature in the greatest city in the civilized world!"

She had made engagements in Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh, and Dublin, but had to give them up because she could not get away from London.

Under date of May 1 she writes:—

"I have just returned from the theatre, after acting the new play for the second time.* It has not succeeded; but my word was pledged to do it, and I have kept my word. It may, perhaps, do me some little injury, but I can afford a trifle, and my next play will bring me up. I am tired; I have acted four times this week, and I act to-morrow night again. Everything goes on finely; I am doing well, and I hope my star may continue in the ascendant. I have given myself *five years more*, and I think at the end of that time I will have $50,000 to retire upon; that will, if well invested, give us a comfortable home for the rest of our lives, and a quiet corner in some respectable graveyard."

A letter of May 18, 1845, is, I grieve to say, the last of this series, as her mother and family joined her shortly after. In it she says:—

"This brings you good news. My manager will not give me up at the end of my engagement, but insists on my going on. The houses continue very fine, and the people are more and more pleased. The idea of acting an engagement of forty-seven nights in seven old plays, and being called out every night, then to have one's engagement renewed for thirty nights more, is a thing that would astonish the natives on the side of the world you inhabit *now*, but which I hope won't hold you long. I assure you I have reason to be more than proud, not only of my success, but of the very kind manner I am treated in private. In fact, I have no moment to myself; and really when I want to write I have to deny myself to my friends, and a constant round of invitations pursues me for all the time I can command."

Of the ordinary newspaper notices of this period a very few extracts will suffice; and it would almost seem

* This was a play by Mr. James Kenny, called "Infatuation."

superfluous to give place to them here, if they were not history, and as such not to be entirely disregarded.

Of Miss Cushman's first appearance in London in the tragedy of "Fazio" the Times says: —

"The great characteristics of Miss Cushman are her earnestness, her intensity, her quick apprehension of 'readings,' her power to dart from emotion to emotion with the greatest rapidity, as if carried on by impulse alone. The early part of the play affords an audience no criterion of what an actress can do; but from the instant where she suspects that her husband's affections are wavering, and with a flash of horrible enlightenment exclaims, 'Fazio, thou hast seen Aldobella!' Miss Cushman's career was certain. The variety which she threw into the dialogue with her husband — from jealousy dropping back into tenderness, from hate passing to love, while she gave an equal intensity to each successive passion, as if her whole soul were for the moment absorbed in that only — was astonishing, and yet she always seemed to feel as if she had not done enough. Her utterance was more and more earnest, more and more rapid, as if she hoped the very force of the words would give her an impetus. The crowning effort was the supplication to Aldobella, when the wife, falling on her knees, makes the greatest sacrifice of her pride to save the man she has destroyed. Nothing could exceed the determination with which, lifting her clasped hands, she urged her suit, — making offer after offer to her proud rival, as if she could not give too much, and feared to reflect on the value of her concessions, — till at last, repelled by the cold marchioness, and exhausted by her own passion, she sank huddled into a heap at her feet. Of the whole after part of the drama, which was distinguished throughout by a sustained energy, this was her great triumph. We need hardly say that Miss Cushman is likely to prove a great acquisition to the London stage. For passion, real, impetuous irresistible passion, she has not at present her superior. At

the end of the play Miss Cushman, who had acted throughout with the greatest applause, came forward and was received with showers of bouquets; never were bouquets more richly merited."

The allusion in this article to the grand culmination of the scene with Aldobella, when she sinks in a broken heap at her feet, will remind many friends of Miss Cushman's own description of the incident: how she was so completely overcome and prostrated, not only by the passion of the scene, but by the nervous agitation of the occasion, that she could not for a time recover possession of herself, and the thunders of applause which burst out and continued cheer upon cheer were more than welcome, as giving her a moment's breathing-space. When at last she rose up and slowly regained her feet, the scene she beheld was one she could never after forget, or fail to recall without the same thrill of excitement. The audience were standing, some on the benches, waving hats and handkerchiefs; and, as the Times says, "Miss Cushman's career was certain."

Of the same occasion the London Sun says:—

"Since the memorable first appearance of Edmund Kean in 1814, never has there been such a début on the boards of an English theatre. She is, without exception, the very first actress that we have. True, we have ladylike, accomplished, finished artists; but there is a wide and impassable gulf between them and Miss Cushman,—the gulf which divides talent, even of the very highest order, from genius. That godlike gift is Miss Cushman's, strictly speaking. We know that it is usual on these occasions to enter into a critical notice of the various beauties developed by a *debutante;* but were we to attempt this, our space would be, in the first place, too limited, for we should have to transcribe nearly the whole part; and, in the next place, we will fairly acknowledge that

we were so completely carried away by the transcendent genius of this gifted lady that, after the magnificent scene in the second act, we could not criticise, we could only admire."

From the London Herald of the same date we have the following: —

"Miss Cushman is tall and commanding, having a fine stage figure. The expression of her face is curious, reminding us of Macready, — a suggestion still further strengthened by the tones of her voice, and frequently by her mode of speech. But that is nothing; she soon proved that she was a great artist on her own account; that she not only possessed peculiar sensitiveness, but that she had all the tact and efficiency resulting from experience. Her energy never degenerated into bombast, and rarely was she artificial. There are several situations in the tragedy requiring the most consummate skill on the part of the actress to render them fully effective, and she achieved at each successive point a fresh triumph. Her tenderness is beautifully energetic and impassioned, while her violence, such as when the sentiment of jealousy suddenly crosses her, is broad and overwhelming, but at the same time not overdone. Miss Cushman is altogether a highly accomplished actress, and it may be easily foreseen that her career in this country will be a most brilliant one."

The versatility of Miss Cushman's powers was next shown to the world of London by her assumption of the part of Rosalind. There are, however, many and most favorable notices of her Lady Macbeth, which I do not quote because her country-people know so well all her excellences in that part they can learn nothing new about it. In Rosalind she seems to have given unbounded satisfaction. From many enthusiastic tributes, I select the following: —

"On Thursday night Miss Cushman gave us the first opportunity of seeing her in a Shakespearian character, — the sweet,

merry, mocking, deep-feeling, true, loving Rosalind, whose heart and head are continually playing at cross purposes; whose wit is as quick to scout and scoff at the tender passion as her heart is ready to receive it, who flies from tenderness to taunting, and back again, as quickly as a bird from bough to bough; who puts on her wit as she does her boy's dress, as a defence against an enemy she knows to be too strong for her. Whilst under her womanly guise the Rosalind of Miss Cushman was a high-bred though most gentle and sweet-tempered lady, with the mirthful spirit which nature had given to her saddened by the misfortunes of herself and father. But, with the indignant reply which she makes to the duke her uncle, on being banished as a traitor, this phase of her character disappears. No sooner is the plan of flight conceived and resolved upon, and the words uttered, —

> 'Were it not better,
> Because that I am more than common tall,
> That I did suit me all points like a man?'

than all sadder thoughts disappear, to make room for the overflowing spirits of the woman. Love itself is put as a mark to be shot at by wit; or rather it is love that arms wit against itself, and gives it all its point.

"But we hear some one say, 'You are speaking of Rosalind, instead of the lady who enacted the part on Thursday night.' We beg to say it is one and the same thing. If ever we looked upon, heard, conceived Rosalind, it was upon that occasion. If ever we listened to the playful wit, the sweet mocking, the merry laugh of Rosalind, if ever we saw her graceful form, her merry eye, her arched brows, her changing looks, it was then and there. Mrs. Nesbit's Rosalind was a sweet piece of acting, full of honey; Madame Vestris's Rosalind is all grace and coquetry; Miss Helen Faucit's (by far the best of them) is full of wit, mirth, and beauty. But Miss Cushman *was* Rosalind. These were all water-colors; but Miss Cushman's Rosalind is in oils, with such brilliancy of light and shade, with such exquisitely delicious touches of

nature and art, with such richness of variety and perfect congruity, that if we did not see Shakespeare's 'very Rosalind,' we never hope or wish to do so. We must confess that, after seeing Miss Cushman in Bianca and Mrs. Haller, we thought her genius essentially tragic; and had we seen her only in Rosalind, we should have thought it essentially comic. But the fact is, as with Shakespeare himself, and most other great poets, the highest genius necessarily embraces both elements of tragic and comic. . . . .

"Miss Cushman's features, if they are deficient in regular beauty, have that flexibility which makes every expression natural to them, and causes them to reflect each thought which passed through the author's brain as he drew the character. Never did we hear Shakespeare's language more perfectly enunciated. Not a syllable was lost, and each syllable was a note. The beauties of the author were as clear, as transparent, as though the thoughts themselves, instead of the words which are their vehicles, were transfused through the senses; eye, ear, heart, took them in, in that perfect form in which they were conceived.

"We may seem extravagant in our praise to those who have not seen Miss Cushman, not to those who have seen her; and we trust she will repeat the part of Rosalind before she leaves us. . . . .

"It struck us as a circumstance contrasting with the effect ordinarily produced by stars upon the general *corps dramatique*, that all seemed to play better with Miss Cushman than they would otherwise have done. The atmosphere of her genius embraced the whole stage, and was not limited to herself. A few such women or men of equal stamp (would we had them!) would work a notable revolution in the English stage."

Another notice of her Rosalind says:—

"By her performance last night Miss Cushman has discovered a new talent. Intensity of emotion, rapid, impetuous

transitions from passion to passion, she had exhibited in the three tragedies that have been presented. But it remained to be seen how she would excel in a character in which light, graceful comedy is required, and which calls forth no one of those qualities by which she had previously gained her public.

"In this, her new trial, she has been most successful, and, if her former achievements were triumphs of energy, this was a triumph of intelligence. By the ease with which she assumed the character she showed how thoroughly she appreciated it: a playful vivacity dictated her words, the 'points' fell readily from her lips; her Rosalind was no empty convention, but a living, breathing, laughing, joyous reality. Yet not all joyous; she shaded the part with nice discrimination. The delicacy with which she first addressed Orlando, when she rewarded him with the chain and spoke as if with difficulty overcoming a scruple, was chaste and maidenlike, and was well followed up by her hurrying back to Celia at the words, 'Shall we go, coz?' The rapidity and anxiety of the questions with which she first asks for Orlando in the forest come out with great effect from the state of nonchalance which had preceded them. Even her song bears witness to her intelligence. She threw into it such a spirit of mirth and vivacity that it told unmistakably upon the audience. But the charm of charms in this impersonation is the hearty sweetness of her laugh; it is contagious from its very sweetness; she seems to laugh from her very soul as she bandies about her jests and makes the love-lorn Orlando the butt of her pretty malicious pleasantries. And even as she feels it, so does her audience. In this part of the play her acting is a great treat to all lovers of art for its truthfulness and its thorough sincerity, and all through the performance she received and well merited the unbounded and unanimous applause of every person present."

In another notice of the same part I find the following:—

"Now, what is the secret of Miss Cushman's success in characters so widely differing from each other as Bianca, Lady

Macbeth, and Rosalind? It is earnestness. She is earnest in whatever she undertakes. She thinks nothing of individual self, but everything of that other self with which for the time she is identified, so that she becomes the very character which she represents; and no actor or actress who does not possess this power can ever become great."

Other notices of Mrs. Haller, Beatrice, etc. are in the same tone of unqualified enthusiasm; each part in succession more warmly received than the last, as she grows in public favor. Apropos of Mrs. Haller, she used to tell with much amusement how her performance of it had affected Mr. Louis Blanc, at that time a political refugee in London, and one of her warm friends. After seeing it first, he had no command of English in which to express his appreciation; but long afterwards, when he had achieved the language, he said to her, "Miss Cushman, I assure you I never have c-r-i-e-d so much in all my life." He had a very large mouth, and rolled his *r*'s tremendously, and her imitation of him was inimitable. I make no apology for reproducing here these extracts from the English papers referring to her first performances there. They are interesting and valuable now as showing how the first verdict justified the last, and how thorough and sincere was the English estimate of her powers.

With these manifestations of public approbation it is needless to say that private appreciation held equal measure. She secured and held the warm esteem and friendship of the most distinguished literary and artistic personages of the day. Verses were written, pictures painted, in her honor. Miss Eliza Cook was a devoted friend, and celebrated her friendship in many fervid lines. The poet Rogers sought her out early, and was most kind in procuring for her the pleasure of meeting all that was best in the social world of London. She often spoke of those

famous breakfasts, made expressly for her, when she was permitted to name those whom she particularly wished to meet, and who were accordingly summoned by this enchanter, whose wealth and celebrity made him a potent influence in that potent world.

Of course, after such pronounced success in London, her career in the provinces was a foregone conclusion. She had made engagements at Brighton, Hull, Manchester, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, etc.; but, before starting upon this tour, she took a furnished cottage at Bayswater, one of the suburbs of London, and established there her family, whom, immediately that she felt her success assured, she had summoned from America. It was there that she and her sister Susan studied "Romeo and Juliet" together. They afterwards went for a few nights to Southampton, where they made their first essay in this performance, which afterwards became so famous and created such a furore in England.

Miss Cushman opened her second engagement in London at the Haymarket Theatre, December 30, 1845, when the sisters made their first appearance together in Shakespeare's tragedy of "Romeo and Juliet." There were many difficulties and vexations behind the scenes in consequence of their determination to act the play according to the original version of Shakespeare instead of the ordinary acting play with which the company were familiar. It may be supposed they resented what they considered an assumption of superiority on the part of these "American Indians," as they called the Misses Cushman, and they made themselves disagreeable accordingly; so much so that Mr. Webster, the manager of the theatre, was obliged to put up a notice in the green-room that any lady or gentleman who made any difficulty or objection to carrying out the wishes of the Misses Cush-

man was welcome to leave the theatre. This tone, however, was very soon changed when the seal of success was stamped upon their effort, and soon the unanimous verdict of the whole community brought the malcontents to better and wiser conclusions. They were destined to become sufficiently familiar with the Shakespearian version, for the tragedy was acted upwards of eighty nights in London alone, and afterwards pursued the same career of almost unexampled success in the provinces, — an unprecedented fact in those times.

Although Miss Cushman's early training as a "utility actress" at the Park Theatre had obliged her to make herself familiar with many male parts, it was not her choice to represent such, and notably in the case of this famous impersonation. She was led to her choice of this play as the one in which to present her sister to an English audience, by her strong desire to be enabled to support her fittingly herself. In her own plays there were few characters in which her sister could appear, or only such in which the standard of position to which she had attained would have to be lowered by her personation of them. By acting Romeo herself, she would add to her sister's attraction, secure her success, and give her that support which it would be difficult otherwise to obtain. It is well known that there is no character in the whole range of the drama so difficult to find an adequate representative for as Romeo. When a man has achieved the experience requisite to *act* Romeo, he has ceased to be young enough to *look* it; and this discrepancy is felt to be unendurable in the young, passionate Romeo, and detracts much from the interest of the play. Who could endure to see a man with the muscles of Forrest, or even the keen intellectual face of Macready, in the part of the gallant and loving boy?

Her assumption of it seemed to fill all the needs at once, — maturity of powers, with gentleness and grace of deportment; and yet, with the inimitable *savoir faire* which belonged to her, she was enabled to throw into it enough of manliness and chivalrous gallantry of demeanor to make the *vraisemblance* perfect, as it proved in the estimation of the public, who received and accepted the unusual combination with delighted enthusiasm.

The newspaper comments upon this performance are very curious, as showing how completely it took the heart of London and all England by storm. Miss Susan Cushman's success was very marked, though there can be little doubt whose *élan* carried the piece along its triumphant course. The Times says: —

"It is enough to say that the Romeo of Miss Cushman is far superior to any Romeo we have ever had. The distinction is not one of degree, it is one of kind. For a long time Romeo has been a convention. Miss Cushman's Romeo is a creation; a living, breathing, animated, ardent human being. The memory of play-goers will call up Romeo as a collection of speeches, delivered with more or less eloquence, not as an individual. Miss Cushman has given the vivifying spark, whereby the fragments are knit together and become an organized entirety. . . . . All the manifestations of Romeo's disposition were given with absolute truth, and the one soul was recognizable through them all. Miss Cushman looks Romeo exceedingly well; her deportment is frank and easy; she walks the stage with an air of command; her eye beams with animation. In a word, Romeo is one of her grand successes."

From Lloyd's Weekly Messenger we extract the following: —

"Miss Cushman's Romeo must henceforth be ranked among her best performances. It was admirably conceived. Every

scene was warm and animated, and at once conveyed the impression of the character. There was no forced or elaborate attempt at feeling or expression. You were addressed by the whole mind; passion spoke in every feature, and the illusion was forcible and perfect. Miss Cushman's particular excellence was in the scene with the Friar, and the concluding scenes of the tragedy. We never saw these scenes so justly conceived or so vigorously executed. The judgment was satisfied and the fancy delighted: they had the excellence of all art. Miss Cushman's talents are certain of commanding success in every character in which vigorous and predominant passion are to be delineated. She is temperate, but never tame; her acting always rouses the feelings without offending the taste. She is the best actress that has appeared upon the English stage since the days of Miss O'Niel."

Another weekly discourses of this performance as follows:—

"Monday introduced us to such a Romeo as we had never ventured to hope for. Certainly, in reading the tragedy feelings of quiet discontent with certain stage renderings often came across us, and a vague idea that if an artist with some faith in his heart as well as in his art should try the character of Romeo, work might be wrought with other hearts. But we had not dreamed of so early an outstripping of all our hopes. The glowing reality and completeness of Miss Cushman's performance perhaps produces the strength of the impression with which she sends us away. The character, instead of being shown us in a heap of *disjecta membra* is exhibited by her in a powerful light which at once displays the proportions and the beauty of the poet's conception. It is as if a noble symphony, distorted, and rendered unmeaning by inefficient conductors, had suddenly been performed under the hand of one who knew in what *time* the composer intended it should be taken. Yet this wonderful completeness, though it may produce upon the public the effect of all high art, that

of concealing the means by which it is obtained, ought not to render the critic unmindful of Miss Cushman's labors in detail. These should be pointed out, not to diminish, but on the contrary to increase, by explaining her triumph. For had her superb conception not been seconded by the utmost exactitude of execution, the effect would have failed. Of this, however, there was no lack, nor is it for us to estimate the pains of a process by which so finished a work was achieved. It is for us merely to record that no symptoms of carelessness or haste appeared, no sentiment was slurred over or half comprehended, no passage slighted as of small importance. The intensity with which the actress has seized the character is grounded upon too reverent an appreciation of its creator's genius to allow her to sit in judgment on the means he has chosen for the accomplishment of his own purpose. The restoration of the plot and text of Shakespeare (thankfully as we receive it) is a part only of this demonstration of the honor in which he is held by the most admirable of his modern illustrators. It breathes through every line of the performance.

"All Miss Cushman's stage business is founded upon intellectual ideas, and not upon conventionalisms; but it is also most effective in a theatrical light. Her walk and attitudes are graceful; the manner in which the courtesy of the stage is given is very high-bred; her fencing is better than skilful, because it is appropriate. Tybalt is struck dead as lightning strikes the pine; one blow beats down his guard, and one lunge closes the fray; indignation has for a moment the soul of Romeo. With Paris there is more display of swordsmanship: he falls by the hand of the lover when 'as fixed, but far too tranquil for despair'; and the gestures, eloquent as words, in the garden scene, and the piteous lingering over the body of Juliet, are portions of the performance which are not likely to pass away from the memory of the spectator, who was compelled in the former to share the lover's enthusiasm, in the latter his agony."

Among these notices of Miss Cushman's Romeo I find

the following warm and appreciative testimonial from James Sheridan Knowles, the well-known dramatist: —

"I witnessed with astonishment the Romeo of Miss Cushman. Unanimous and lavish as were the encomiums of the London press, I was not prepared for such a triumph of pure genius. You recollect, perhaps, Kean's third act of Othello. Did you ever expect to see anything like it again? I never did, and yet I saw as great a thing last Wednesday night in Romeo's scene with the Friar, after the sentence of banishment, quite as great! I am almost tempted to go further. It was a scene of topmost passion; not simulated passion, — no such thing; real, palpably real; the genuine heart-storm was on, — on in wildest fitfulness of fury; and I listened and gazed and held my breath, while my blood ran hot and cold. I am sure it must have been the case with every one in the house; but I was all absorbed in Romeo, till a thunder of applause recalled me to myself. I particularize this scene because it is the most powerful, but every scene exhibited the same truthfulness. The first scene with Juliet, for instance, admirably personated by her beautiful sister, was exquisitely faithful, — the eye, the tone, the general bearing, — everything attesting the lover smit to the core at first sight, and shrinkingly and falteringly endeavoring, with the aid of palm and eye and tongue, to break his passion to his idol. My heart and mind are so full of this extraordinary, most extraordinary performance, that I know not where to stop or how to go on. Throughout it was a triumph equal to the proudest of those which I used to witness years ago, and for a repetition of which I have looked in vain till now. There is no trick in Miss Cushman's performance; no thought, no interest, no feeling, seems to actuate her, except what might be looked for in Romeo himself were Romeo reality."

Their appearance in this tragedy was due to an act of concession on the part of the Dublin manager, Mr. Calcraft, who waived his rights to allow of its production in

London. Almost immediately afterwards they left London to fulfil their engagements in the provinces, acting first in Dublin a six weeks' engagement, in the course of which they played "Romeo and Juliet," and "Ion," and Miss Cushman's usual round of characters. They also played "Twelfth Night" together, Miss Cushman taking the part of Viola. There are numerous enthusiastic notices of these performances in the provinces; but it is sufficient for my purpose to have given those which marked the great success in London, the verdict there making the result elsewhere certain.

She was a special favorite with the Dublin audiences, and with the Irish people generally, and made many warm and devoted friends in the green island. They felt in sympathy with all that was genial and impulsive in her nature, and friends will remember hearing her often say that nowhere, in all her experience, did she find the magnetic spark of sympathy so quickly and readily enkindled as with her Irish audiences. But why should we say that in one place more than another Miss Cushman succeeded in touching the hearts of her audiences; the potent spell lay in her, and between her and the beating heart of humanity, which all the world over is lying in wait, as it were, for the magnetic touch, the winged word, "the spark as of fire from the altar," which, as it kindles, makes the whole world kin.

I may recall here one or two of the Irish stories with which Miss Cushman used "to bring down the house," privately, for the entertainment of her friends and guests. She would have been a wonderful linguist if the means of educating her great faculties had been accorded her in early life; as it was, she had the greatest gift for speaking "broken tongues" and dialects ever heard. The brogue not only came natural to her, but she knew how to distinguish

between the accents of different parts of Ireland, and often puzzled the natives themselves to discover whether she came from the north or the south. One of our dear Irish friends in Rome, a noble specimen of the true Irish gentlewoman, never talked anything but the brogue with Miss Cushman, and as she was uncommonly witty and clever, the contact of their wits on these occasions struck out many a bright spark. It was the same with the Scotch, the German, and even the Italian; and her power over the negro dialect would have set up endless troops of negro minstrels. Many will recall her masterly rendering of Burns in "A Man 's a Man for a' That," "The Annuity," and that wonderful effort, "The Death of the Old Squire," as well as "The Swivil Rights Bill," and others of her comic selections. But she had, beside these, an inexhaustible supply of such bits of drollery, with which she used "to set the table in a roar," and which she enjoyed herself to the full as much as they did.

On one occasion, when she was acting in Dublin, she started out with the intention of taking a short drive, and called up one of the cabs in waiting, near her hotel. It was what is called, in Dublin parlance, "an outside car," that is, an open vehicle with the seat running sideways over the wheels. There was a little look of rain in the air, and she said to the man, "Do you think it will rain?" "Divil a dhrop," said he promptly. "Well, remember now, if it rains I will not pay you," said she. "Hop up," was the answer. After they had gone a short distance a large drop of rain splashed upon her silk dress. She touched his arm. "Look here," said she, "what do you call that?" "O, that 's nothing at all." "Faith, I 'll be dhrounded," said Miss Cushman, in the broadest Dublin brogue. Cabby looked at her out of the corner

of his eye. It was enough; the sympathetic note had been struck, and he poured forth endless stores of fun and drollery all the rest of the drive, answering all her questions instantly, right or wrong, true or false, with a ready wit peculiarly Irish. As they passed the post-office, Miss Cushman pointed to some statues on the top of the building, and asked him what they were. "Faith, thim 's the twelve apostles," said he. "But there are only four of them," said Miss Cushman; "where are the others?" "Faith," said paddy, "they must be below, sortin' the letthers."

On another occasion she asked one of the car drivers, "What is the difference between an outside and an inside car?" "The difference," said he, — "the difference? Well, sure, it 's just this; an inside car has its wheels on the outside, and an outside car has 'em on the inside"; which is as true a definition as could be devised.

Another Irish incident she used to tell was the following. During one of her engagements in Dublin a very full house had assembled; the Lord Lieutenant was coming in state; there had been excitement over certain elections, and party spirit ran high. The audience amused itself before the opening of the play by calling out for cheers for this, that, and the other, shouting for some, groaning for others, and making great disturbance; so much so that the play could not be heard. There were fears that it might end in rioting. Suddenly, in the midst of the confusion a voice called out, "Three cheers for the divil!" Upon which name both parties united with hearty enthusiasm, and peace was restored.

The Dublin audiences were very turbulent, very enthusiastic, and much given to uttering their thoughts and feelings aloud, from pit to gallery, and often to the performers on the stage. One night a sudden disturbance

occurred among the gods, and could not be easily quieted. Of course the pit took the matter in hand; much wit was bandied about, up and down, and as in old pagan times a victim was demanded. "Throw him over, throw him over!" resounded from all sides. Suddenly, in a lull of the confusion, a delicate female voice was heard exclaiming in dulcet tones, "O, no, don't throw him over, kill him where he is!"

CHAPTER IV.

"There is no soul
More stronger to direct you than yourself."
Henry VIII.
"Those about her,
From her shall read the perfect ways of honor."
Henry VIII.

IN March, 1847, the sisters commenced their provincial tour by acting an engagement of six weeks in Dublin, afterwards going to Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Hull, Newcastle, Sheffield, Brighton, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Cork, Limerick, Dundee, Perth, etc., closing at Liverpool, where they made a visit at Seaforth Hall, the seat of Mr. James Muspratt, whose son, Dr. J. Sheridan Muspratt, Miss Susan Cushman (or Mrs. Merriman) afterwards married.

They also made during this season a short excursion to Paris, and it was at this time Miss Cushman made the acquaintance of Mr. Henry F. Chorley, the well-known dramatic and musical critic of the Athenæum, a man much respected for his unbending integrity as a critic, as well as for his sterling qualities as a man. He was a warm friend to Miss Cushman, and continued so to the day of his death. Some extracts from his letters referring to this period may not be uninteresting. Hers to him have, unfortunately, not been preserved.

In a letter dated April, 1847, we find the first allusion

to his play, "The Duchess Eleanor," which Miss Cushman afterwards acted in, but which did not prove a success. Miss Cushman is at Malvern, recruiting from the fatigues of her two seasons; and he says:—

"Keep yourself tranquilly, hopefully, *in lavender*, both mind and body, and get as much rest, health, and strength, as you can. When you come again to London you are right in thinking that you must come *well*. A more unpropitious season than this could not have been, and it is just as well that the play was not tried, though I begin to think I shall never have the agreeable misery of seeing anything of mine acted, beyond some sort of a namby-pamby opera translation. It is charming to get old, because one has no longer high-raised expectations."

Another letter of this period is from Switzerland, and fixes Miss Cushman's locality as still at Malvern, where she was in the habit of going whenever suffering from overwork or nervous exhaustion, and always with great benefit:—

"I have been more enchanted than I expected with Switzerland. When one has heard much of any sight, as of any person, spiritual pride is apt to say, 'After all, the thing is not worth so very much.' This poor country has, perhaps beyond all others, been given over as a prey to travelling men, women, and children. But, though the weather has been wretched and the season much too late, I have had very great enjoyment. To *describe* is impossible. There are only some few bits of Byron here and there, among all that has been written, which in the slightest manner approach the grandeur of the reality. Perhaps, if we are so happy as to have a cosey London winter near each other, bits of scenery and wayside adventure may come out in *talk*, such as shall even match our rummages of the shops or the theatres in our never-to-be-forgotten holiday of October last.

"I must tell you that at Vevay I fell into the company of Mrs. Trollope, who was wonderfully mystified to discover what manner of animal I was, and I *must* say was very agreeable. We had also three charming days with Mendelssohn at Interlaken, and, in short, have not lacked entertainment, though, owing to the weather, with not precisely as many snow mountains for breakfast, glaciers for dinner, and lakes for tea as we would bespeak when setting out for a Swiss ramble.

"Now, in the hope of our pleasant meeting in late October (as I am booked for the 15th), let me provoke you and Mrs. M——, wind and Maddox permitting, to dine with me on Gunpowder Treason Day, November 5, when my house opens its doors and cries, 'Chorley at home again.'"

"Need I say how heartily I wish and hope that this may find you better for the cold 'water privileges' you are enjoying, and the *hot* water ditto which I must undergo if 'Duchess Elinor' at last comes to a hearing? This is not a letter, the wisest of queens will please to observe, but merely a card of inquiry from one who hopes to prove himself," etc.

On the subject of the play he says in a later letter:—

"As to seeing Mr. Maddox, do you know I think it would be for every one's best that I should be *the moon behind the clouds.* Since you and I understand each other so completely that I have no earthly fear of the affair not being safer in *your* hands than mine, and I will work morning, noon, and night and midnight, till you are contented. My disinclination means no avoidance of labor or responsibility, but a conviction that my being known is more likely to hinder than to help the success of the piece. I don't think much of the work myself, save in seeing the confidence with which it inspires you, and from believing the time is come when the public would like to have a play for a great woman. Therefore, just turn this over in your mind, whether it would not be better for you to say that you will see the *royal author* on Sunday,

who is ready to make such changes as Queen Cushman and Manager Maddox may agree upon, but for many reasons is anxious to blush unseen until his fate is ascertained. But I leave everything at your disposal and discretion. Hoping to find a note to say that you are coming to eat Heaven knows what this day week at my octagon table at five o'clock," etc.

Later on, October 23, he writes: —

"Thanks for your note, and for your steady efforts to see justice done to the Duchess. In my case, beyond the certain fidget which, be a man hard as a stone, will from time to time wear one when the matter has been so long protracted, I feel little in the affair save the encouragement of your great kindness, which I take as encouragement, inasmuch as it is not phrasing, but must be sincere from the nature and manner of its manifestations."

On October 28 he writes: —

"Had I not found your note on coming home from the theatre, I *must* have written to you after the Queen Katharine, which I went to see quietly. You are wholly wrong *to fancy that the part does not do you good, and you good to the part.* What will you say when I tell you that it has given me a higher idea of your power than any I have yet seen you act? I like it all, conception, execution, everything. I like the plainness, the simplicity, and the utter absence of all strain or solemnity.

"You know I am difficult, and little given to praising any one. Most of all was I delighted to hear how your level voice, when not forced, tells, and tells thoroughly. Now believe I don't say this to put you in good-humor, or for any other reason than because it is honest and *must* come!

"As for the critics, remember that from time immemorial they have been always, at first, unjust to new and natural readings. The *house* shows how little harm or good they do, and of *its* humor there was no doubt; though people who

have been wiping their eyes on apricot-colored bonnet-strings, as I saw one young lady of nature doing, can't find time or coolness to applaud as they ought. In short, I was pleased, *much* pleased, and shall tell you yet more about the same when I see you, and I am truly glad for your own sake you have played the part. A—— and I were two sitting notes of admiration; he is going to write one also. I believe I saw the angelic manager hovering on the stairs; but I don't think he knows me if he sees me, or I would let my beard grow again as fast as possible, and dye it black, by way of mystification."

From some undated notes:—

"I write to you immediately on hearing from the Neighbourina, to say that I hope you will dine with me on Sunday week, with Mrs. M——, if she shall so please, as it will be merely a business dinner, and myself will only arrive late on Saturday evening. There can be no truffles, alas! nor sarcophagus puddings; only bones to pick, and greetings to exchange, and measures to be taken that the Duchess be written neither smaller nor taller than the pleasant public shall please. My first impulse was to pack up soul and body immediately on receiving yours. Then it occurred to me that all the week you will be busy at rehearsal, and that probably the day I mention may be the earliest you could really devote to our affair; so that I am acting, I hope, for the best against my impatience in thus bidding you to a conference eight days hence."

In default of Miss Cushman's own letters of this period, which have been, through lapse of time and combination of circumstances, unfortunately lost or destroyed, I have thought it best to introduce any letters written *to her* having any value in themselves, which have come into my hands, believing that nothing can be unimportant which illustrates even incidentally a career like hers.

"The Duchess Elinor" was not produced until Miss Cushman's return to England in 1855.

For the year 1848 there are few memoranda or letters, and memory must be invoked for a record of her movements, which were many and varied. The activity of her life during these English years was amazing, both in the direction of work and play. It is notable that work always follows play as a natural and inevitable sequence, and the social relaxation which was so necessary, and which she enjoyed with her whole heart, never absorbed her to the extent of making her forget her duties to her art or to her family. We have brief records of delightful tours into all the most lovely parts of England, almost always undertaken with or for friends with whom she wished to share the pleasure of the excursion. She never could and never did, in all the course of her life, enjoy anything alone or selfishly; and such friends as have shared with her these unequalled experiences will remember how perfect she was as hostess, companion, helper, how ordinary difficulties cleared away before her, how rough places became smooth and bright spots brighter under her genial influence. It has been well said that a sincere desire to give pleasure was her chief characteristic; it might be added, to take it also, for she had a real genius for enjoyment; no one was ever more ready and glad to be pleased, and to accept with more gracious cordiality the simplest effort to afford her gratification.

In the early part of this year the sisters were acting together again in the provinces, always with the same success. On the 10th of July Miss Cushman acted "Queen Katharine" for Mr. Macready's farewell benefit at Drury Lane Theatre. The queen was present, and it was a very grand occasion. After this she went to Manchester on a visit, and then to Bolton Woods for two months, stopping at a farm-house on the estate of the Duke of Devonshire. The duke was then living there at

one of his hunting-lodges, and was very kind to Miss Cushman, sending his carriage for her to come to luncheon with him, and showing her many kind attentions.

Among the letters of 1846 – 48 I find some from Miss Jewsbury, the well-known authoress, who was one of Miss Cushman's earliest friends in England. They are carelessly dated, but belong to the above time. In one I find the following. Speaking of a dinner-party she had attended she says: —

"I did not get next the man laid out for me, but had for companion a good Englishman, to whom I had the comfort of talking about *you*. He had never seen you, and for many years had given up going to theatres, as he is faithful to the memory of Mrs. Siddons and all that generation, and has even preserved the playbills. But he talked very well and most enthusiastically, and listened to all I said with great faith, and the next time you come here he is fully purposed to go. We were settling *you* the whole dinner-time, and I could not help laughing to see how people instinctively find their point of sympathy. Although he had not been to see you act, he felt a sympathy with you for what you had done for your family; he said he had heard of *that*, and it happens that all his family had been thrown on him, and he behaved in a most worthy way. He was intended for the church, and had a most decided inclination for it; but whilst he was at college his father died in embarrassed circumstances, and this man was obliged to leave college, and go behind a counter and drudge for years to retrieve his affairs and bring up the rest of the family, hating it all the time; but he did it, and adopted two of his sister's children beside; finally made his fortune and retired, and is extremely respected, as he deserves to be; and *there* was your point of interest to him. He *knew* what it was you had done, and could appreciate it."

In another letter she says: —

"My dear Charlotte: I feel very anxious about you. It

seems to me when people have attained your *height*, the wear and tear of keeping *up* is worse than the fatigue of *climbing*. You seem to me in that way in your last. I can understand how it is, though I am not come to the dignity of feeling it on my own account. I fancy it is a *good omen;* none but those able to *go on* can feel it; and after a triumph such as you have achieved it is natural you should feel like a racer *after* the course, not up to running again at present; people never feel so *strong* as after a defeat, nor so weak and trembling as after a victory,—so little able, I mean, to do more. So, dear, if you have any fears or misgivings, don't heed them. It is only a sign that success has not intoxicated you, and that you are not *uncoiled* all your length.

"As to what you say of not having been 'up to the mark.' You are not a *machine*, but a woman of genius. Nothing is certain and constant in its action but *mechanism*, and yet the best thing done by mechanism is not so valuable as the uncertain, varying, sometimes imperfect result of human efforts. What you effect comes from *within*, and if you were always 'up to the mark,' it would be a great presumption that it was mechanical, and came from *without*. So do not disturb yourself for nothing. I have no need to say 'Go on,' for you are one of those who cannot help it. Tell me how you go on, for indeed and indeed I feel for your success more than I ever could do for my own."

The following extract refers evidently to Miss Cushman's first visit to Malvern, which became afterwards such a favorite resort.

"My dearest Charlotte: I was very glad to get your note, and to see your handwriting once more. I am very anxious to hear how hydropathy suits you. It is no use saying anything *now*, but still I *hope* you had good medical sanction before you ventured yourself upon it. My dear child, do persuade somebody, from a general sense of good-nature, to write me a few lines of *particulars* concerning your present state,

and how you get on with the cold water; they cannot be too minute. If any old nurse would write I should have a chance of hearing more than any of your *clever ones* could think of saying. I have it! Give my best regards to your Sallie, and tell her to write me a letter all about you and nothing else in nature. I am very grieved that *rest* has come to you in such a miserable guise, but it will be the means of saving your life. You were going on too fast, and now, when you are once set on your two feet again, you will have gained more power than if you had never been laid low. Be patient, my dear child, and don't chafe or fret yourself. This *rest*, thus forced upon you, will be a quarry out of which you will get many precious materials."

Another letter refers still to Malvern, and her anxious fears for Miss Cushman's health, which had suffered much from over-exertion.

"My dearest Child: You are in a bad way just now, and no wonder; you have had enough to drive to distraction a whole regiment of *men*, let alone *women*. But don't distress yourself too much in your own heart; your depression and discouragement, your weariness and vexation of spirit, are in a great measure the result of all the superhuman exertions you have had to go through for the last few months. Living in London society does, under any circumstances, make one exquisitely sad, and you have had its essence, doubly and trebly distilled and powerful. You must expect, and cannot help but find, a reaction as strong as the excitement has been. The life you have led, the success, the acclamations, the perfect glare of triumph in which you have moved for the last few months, are almost fabulous. No nervous system that was ever of woman born could stand it: you are a perfect miracle in my eyes; but you are proving your mortality by suffering. You will recover your balance, never fear. Set down all the wretchedness and morbid discomfort you are suffering now just to physical causes. Think of them just as a headache or

an illness; but the present uneasiness is *all* you have to fear; it lies no deeper, believe me, and will pass away. You are overworked, overstrained altogether, and you look at things in general as we are apt to do when we lie awake at night; everything then looks black and haggard-like; there is nothing really bad or wrong the matter, so do not make yourself miserable. It is bad enough to suffer, God knows, but there is no worse at the bottom, and that 's a comfort. You must contrive not to do so much another year. Your 'passionate work' will kill you else; for though nature is very elastic, she won't stand too much. Remember what I am saying is not fancy, for I have suffered myself, and I have studied the philosophy of the thing, and so I consider I am qualified to speak, and you are to believe what I tell you. Do you hear?"

Following Miss Jewsbury's letters I may here insert some of her remembrances of Miss Cushman at that time, with which she has kindly favored me. She writes: —

"I think it was very soon after she arrived in England for the first time that she came to Manchester, where I then resided. She brought letters to me, and was alone, except for Sallie, her faithful maid, who I hope is still alive, and if so I beg to be remembered to her kindly. I suppose Miss Cushman was not handsome, but the beautiful, true, and firm gray eyes gave me the impression of beauty, and supplied the lack of it, if it were lacking. To me she always looked beautiful. Her voice, too, was true and real like herself, and of a *tone* that was very pleasant to the ear. She conveyed the impression of protection and strength.

"In those days she had not yet begun the fight and struggle of her professional career in England. She had appeared in London in Milman's tragedy of 'Fazio,' and made a very great impression. In Manchester she made many friends, quiet, domestic people, who regarded her with affection and respect. She was noble and generous, and gave help to whoever needed

it, to the utmost of her ability. As she said once to me herself, 'she tried always to keep her prow turned towards good,' and I feel sure that desire underlay the whole of her life.

"We lost sight of each other, as was only natural in lives which lay so wide apart. The last year she was in England I wrote to her; but she was ill, and could not see me. Then came her apparent recovery; and then the unexpected end, when all her friends had begun to hope the danger was past. Of her acting in some of her characters I retain a vivid recollection. Her 'Meg Merrilies,' and that strange, silent spring to the middle of the stage, which was her entrance on it, can never be forgotten; nor the tones of her voice, which seemed to come from another world. Madame Vestris said that 'Meg Merrilies made her turn cold.' The song she crooned in the part was exactly as Meg would have given it, and suggested no other person, and no acting. Indeed, all her characters were singularly true and individual. She never seemed to display herself in her acting.

"I remember her Mrs. Haller well. She seemed to absorb and consume all the false sentiment of the play, and to elicit only the *real* suffering of the character, and the tragical truth *that nothing can undo ill deeds once done.* It was, I think, the character in which she most impressed me. The chief charm of her acting was, as I remember it, its intense earnestness and directness, and the absence of all self-consciousness or of any desire to impress herself upon the spectator. In those days she used to sing in private in a very dramatic and remarkable manner. It is so long ago, that I am afraid I have been able to help you little; but I am glad to make my record of the esteem and affection in which I held her, and of my admiration for the single-handed strife she carried on and the uprightness with which she attained at last her fortune and success. It will be a help and comfort to many who are now struggling in the same thorny paths."

The above remark may not inappropriately introduce a few extracts from letters and notes written at this time

by Miss Cushman to a young friend in England, who with much ability and ambition, and many material lets and hindrances, was seeking to find a career, and afterwards by Miss Cushman's assistance successfully entered the dramatic profession. They are interesting as showing what a specialty she had as helper and comforter, and how well she could minister to the needs of the spirit as well as of the body, in the midst of her own arduous labors.

"I knew all you have told me of your circumstances," she writes, "before I spoke to you. You will believe, from what I have told you of my own character and study, that I do not recklessly waste my feeling; and when you ask me if I shall despise you for your employment, you little know the admiration you have excited in me by your capabilities, and I admire you all the more for not despising it yourself. How many there are who have *a horror of my profession!* Yet I dearly love the very hard work, the very drudgery of it, which has made me what I am. Despise labor of any kind! I honor it, and only despise those who do not find sufficient value in it to admire. You did not know me when you asked me if I would despise you for it! But you must find little time for practising music, — a hard and labor-demanding vocation. I have tried it myself, therefore am fully qualified to speak of it. Have you calculated the time it must take to fit you for a teacher, and are you able to give your whole heart to it? For, indeed, it demands it. Your gentleness of disposition will do much for you in it, for oh! it requires more patience than brains. But you have brains of no ordinary kind, that would be chained into a narrow compass over a piano. How very many, with no earthly capacity, — mere machines, automata, — rise to eminence as pianists and teachers of the piano!

"It seems to me a waste of God's greatest gift, intellect. It is not alone poetry that you write well. Your notes and letters are mature, and free from girlishness or mawkish sen-

timent. You write as freshly as you think, and your thoughts are as genuine and fresh as your expression; and I could almost grieve over those circumstances which have given you more confidence in this than in your other gifts. Would not the time spent upon the study of the piano prove of more serious benefit to you spent in the study of the poetic art?

"I have not time even to tell you what I think of your lines, but I will in a few days. Meantime let me urge you to condense your thoughts, to bring them all into the fewest words possible. Concentration is the grand merit of all writing as well as all action. You have the power in you, and you will show it.

"Now that I know your ideas upon the profession you are preparing yourself for, I have not a word to say. You seemed to me 'young thoughted.' I imagined it but a fancy that possessed you, as likely to bring only pleasure in its employment. I know the toil it is. I know the wearying work it is to teach. I know the unceasing and untiring patience it requires, and I feared you had not looked upon all the disagreeables. However, I find you *have*, and you seem to have judged prudently. But were your situation other than it is, were more required of you *pecuniarily*, I should have advised anything on earth but teaching as a means of living. Don't let anything that I have said cause you a moment's care with regard to it. I think I told you in my last that, not knowing your idea, I was not competent to give an opinion; not for the world would I interfere with what seems, as you present it to me, prudent. Yet remembering that, no matter how much you teach, you must be kept *in practice* yourself, or you fail to inspire confidence, I feel you have selected a laborious profession; but God speed you, and give you patience, which is *all* that is necessary.

"I could wish you would endeavor to bring your poetical gift more under subjection; that is, that you would study more and write less. You say change is necessary to prevent the mind exhausting itself. Don't talk at your age of the

mind being *exhausted* upon *any* subject. You have much before you, and *reading* can be so varied as to make a constant change. I cannot tell you how much I admire your letters, and the free, open thought you express in them. Pray continue to look upon me as one to whom you may utter all your thinkings, although I may not be able to afford you all the help you need in your struggles with yourself. Only do not lacerate your flesh too much."

Here an interval occurs, during which the idea of the stage as a profession seems to have been adopted. The following extracts bear reference to this change: —

"I should advise you to get to work; all *ideal* study of acting, without the *trial* or opportunity of trying our efforts and conceivings upon others, is, in my mind, lost time. Study while you act. Your conception of character can be formed while you read your part, and only practice can tell you whether you are right. You would, after a year of study in your own room, come out unbenefited, save in as far as self-communion ever must make us better and stronger; but this is not what you want just now. *Action* is needed. Your vitality must in some measure work itself off. You must suffer, labor, and wait, before you will be able to grasp the true and the beautiful. You dream of it now; the intensity of life that is in you, the spirit of poetry which makes itself heard by you in indistinct language, needs *work* to relieve itself and be made clear. I feel diffident about giving advice to you, for you know your own nature better than any one else can, but I should say to you, get to work in the best way you can. All your *country* work will be wretched; you will *faint* by the way; but you must rouse your great strength and struggle on, bearing patiently your cross on the way to your crown! God bless you and prosper your undertakings. I know the country theatres well enough to know how utterly alone you will be in such companies; but keep up a good heart; we have only to do well what is given us to do, to find heaven. .

"Mr. Barton is not in Bath or Bristol now, therefore if you were to go you would not be getting what I want you to go there for, namely, lessons in speaking, — to know the capabilities of your own voice, and how to manage it."

This is the same Mr. Barton whom she mentions in her New Orleans experiences as having been kind to her, and with whom she made her first appearance as an actress, on the occasion of his benefit. Times were changed with him, as with her, and she was enabled in many ways substantially to return the kindness he had shown her.

"I think if you have to wait for a while it will do you no harm. You seem to me quite frantic for immediate work; but teach yourself quiet and repose in the time you are waiting. With half your strength I could bear to wait and labor with myself to conquer *fretting*. The greatest power in the world is shown in conquest over self. More life will be worked out of you by fretting than all the stage-playing in the world. God bless you, my poor child. You have indeed troubles enough; but you have a strong and earnest spirit, and you have the true religion of labor in your heart. Therefore I have no fears for you, let what will come. Let me hear from you at your leisure, and be sure you have no warmer friend than I am and wish to be. . . . .

"I was exceedingly pleased to hear such an account of your first appearance. You were quite right in all that was done, and I am rejoiced at your success. Go on; persevere. You will be sure to do what is right, for your heart is in the right place, your head is sound, your reading has been good. Your mind is so much better and stronger than any other person's whom I have known enter the profession, that your career is plain before you.

"But I will advise you to remain in your own native town for a season, or at least the *winter*. You say you are afraid of remaining among people who know you. Don't have this

feeling at all. You will have to be more particular in what you do, and the very feeling that you cannot be indifferent to your audience will make you take more pains. Beside this, you will be at home, which is much better for a time; for then at first you do not have to contend with a strange home as well as with a strange profession. I could talk to you a volume upon this matter, but it is difficult to write. At all events I hope you will take my counsel and remain at home this winter. It is the most wretched thing imaginable to go from home a novice into such a theatre as any of those in the principal towns.

"Only go on and work hard, and you will be sure to make a good position. With regard to your faults, what shall I say? Why, that you will try hard to overcome them. I don't think they would be perceived save by those who perhaps imagine that your attachment for me has induced you to join the profession. I have no mannerisms, I hope; therefore any imitation of me can only be in the earnest desire to do what you can do, as well as you can. Write to me often; ask of me what you will; my counsel is worth little, but you shall command it if you need it."

The young friend to whom the foregoing letters were addressed, after a successful theatrical career of some years, in the course of which she came to this country and acted with Miss Cushman, married very happily and left the stage. She was an earnest, faithful, and true soul, and her grateful devotion to Miss Cushman remained unchanged to the day of her death. She died early; but while she lived life was a full, bright, and sparkling river to her, and the friends she brought about her, — friends chosen from the best literary and artistic society of London. Her house was one of Miss Cushman's chosen resting-places. Her appreciation of it, and of the friends it contained, she has herself recorded in several of her letters.

"I have never known," she says, "three more soul-satisfying

days than those at S—— D——'s. He is the sweetest, whitest soul in his home you ever saw, and she is goodness and duty and love personified. Clever and dominant in certain things, but with a power of submission to him, and all she loves, as wondrous in these days of toil and trouble as you can imagine anything to be, and as extraordinary the one as the other. You don't know how we two grow and thrive in this atmosphere. How much as one's own individualities are respected and loved we are forced by atmosphere to love and respect theirs. They were three perfect days."

It was at this house she first met Mrs. Carlyle, that wonderful woman, who was able to live in the full light of Carlyle's genius and celebrity without being overshadowed by it; who was in her own way as great as he, and yet who lived only to minister to him. In the letter already quoted Miss Cushman describes her first interview with Mrs. Carlyle: —

"On Sunday, who should come self-invited to meet me but Mrs. Carlyle? She came at one o'clock and stayed until eight. And such a day I have not known! Clever, witty, calm, cool, unsmiling, unsparing, a *raconteur* unparalleled, a manner *un*imitable, a behavior scrupulous, and a power invincible, — a combination rare and strange exists in that plain, keen, unattractive, yet unescapable woman! O, I must *tell* you of that day, for I cannot write it! After she left, of course we talked *her* until the small hours of the morning."

After this she often saw Mrs. Carlyle in her own house, and had the privilege also of seeing the Thunderer himself engaged in the mundane process of taking his tea like any ordinary mortal, and hearing him talk — *not* like any other mortal that ever was made, for no creature but himself could ever say the things he said and in the way he said them. When in the right mood, and to the right listeners, Carlyle was greater than his books; for then

manner was added to *matter*, and even more characteristic and individual. He had a method of talking on and on and on with a curious rising and falling inflection of voice, catching his breath now and then on the lower key, and then going on again in the higher, in the broadest Scotch accent, and ever and anon giving out peals of the heartiest laughter over his own extraordinary pictures. This peculiar manner of speech — the broad accent, the tremendous, breathless earnestness which he would infuse into the smallest topic if it were one which anywhere touched his instincts of reformer — Miss Cushman imitated to perfection.

Meanwhile his wife, quiet and silent, assiduously renewed his cup of tea, or by an occasional word, or judicious note, struck just at the right moment, kept him going, as if she wielded the mighty imagination at her pleasure, and evoked the thunder and the sunshine at her will. When she was alone, and herself the entertainer, one became aware of all the self-abnegation she practised, for she was herself a remarkably brilliant talker, and the stories of quaint wit and wisdom which she poured forth, the marvellous memory which she displayed, were in the minds of many quite as remarkable and even more entertaining than the majestic utterances of her gifted husband. It was said that those who came to sit at his feet remained at hers.

CHAPTER V.

"Praising what is lost
Makes the remembrance dear."
All's Well That Ends Well.

WITH some further notes and memories, kindly furnished me by an old and esteemed friend of Miss Cushman's, I close my references to those early days in England.

"I shall be glad to try," he writes, "whether my memory and pen enable me to set down any impressions which may interest those younger friends whose acquaintance with her does not date back, as mine does, more than a quarter of a century. It is in fact more than thirty years since I first paid my respects to Charlotte Cushman in my father's house, soon after her arrival in London in 1845. She was then about thirty years of age, tall, active, bright in face and manner, full of wit and humor, and brilliant in manner and expression. If I were asked what special quality distinguished her then, and indeed throughout her whole life, my reply would be, intensity; the power of plunging her whole mind and spirit, and indeed her entire self, into the character which she for the moment desired to personate. She was for the time that very character, that man Romeo, that woman Juliana, Viola, or Katharine. Not that, like Garrick, 'when off the stage always acting'; far from it: off the stage she was invariably, — as she cordially expressed it in Julia in 'The Hunchback' — 'her open, honest, independent self.'

"But this *intensity*, as I shall call it, characterized her entire being and the current of all her thoughts and deeds. It was as brightly shown in private life as on the public stage. . . . . And she was equally intense, with an honest and heartfelt sympathy, when sorrow or suffering appealed to her. I have often wondered whether comedy or tragedy was her *forte;* but in truth she was of that great first rank in the histrionic art where no such distinctions can be drawn. It was not mere nature uneducated and unskilled, but nature fostered and trained by diligent study and steady application, which dictated to her genius the art which charmed and delighted the world.

"Her power of arresting attention and commanding silence was most remarkable, and never more so than in the crowded and fashionable London circles. At a grand soirée where 'all London' was assembled and chattering, even while distinguished amateurs were singing or playing, it was curious to observe the dead silence, first of surprise, then of admiration, produced by Miss Cushman's recitation of 'Lord Ullin's Daughter.'

"At the time of her arriving in England, and for some years after, her singing, although the upper notes of her voice had disappeared, was excellent of its kind, and her power of musical declamation, so essential to good ballad-singing, was remarkably fine. To hear her sing, 'We were two Daughters of one Race,' or 'They tell me Thou 'rt the Favored Guest,' was a great musical treat, full not only of dramatic genius, but of pathos, sweetness, and vigor. Nor was it less remarkable as a work of art, because the artist was, by consummate skill and knowledge, conquering the imperfections of an organ already almost destroyed, her great science enabling her to make use of what remained, while the intensity of her feeling absolutely riveted her audience. Arriving in London, not only an unknown actress, but without any of that preliminary flourish which is so unfortunately common nowadays, it may well be understood that Miss Cushman had no small trouble in obtain-

ing a suitable début; but I believe that few can realize the obstacles of every kind that beset her course; and even when a London manager had determined to give her an opportunity, there was, on his part, an utter absence of cordial support, and an entire incapability of appreciating the genius and talents of the new candidate for London histrionic honors. It was not until the day after her début that the lessee of the Princess's Theatre began to see that he had in his hand one of the trump cards of the game which he was engaged in playing; and even then his nature did not prompt him to any generous or even any prudent acceptance of the services of the greatest tragic and comic actress of the day. But a very few nights convinced all London that she had merits far beyond anything at that day on the boards. I remember when a boy hearing it observed of that clever and versatile actor, Charles Kemble, that it always seemed as if the costume of each character was that in which the man habitually lived, and that whether as Faulconbridge he 'strolled into Angiers,' or sprang upon the stage as Don Felix, he was in dress and bearing the man whom he represented. So might it always have been said of Charlotte Cushman, whose Queen Katharine, Julia, Juliana, Lady Macbeth, and Lady Gay Spanker were all as distinct and clear realities as nature itself.

"In 1845 – 46 Miss Cushman was certainly fortunate in being associated with that excellent actor, James Wallack, whose admirable acting, no less than his generous advice, rich from long experience and the remembrance of bygone years of fellowship with the Kembles, Elliston, Young, Miss O'Neill, Miss Chester, and a host of great artists, were invaluable to the young and almost unfriended actress, whose fate for a time trembled in the scales of public favor. Recalling a few of the triumphs of that time, passing over Bianca in 'Fazio,' of which nothing remains unsaid, my mind reverts pleasantly to the genuine success of her Julia in 'The Hunchback,' with its admirable cast, — Mrs. Sterling as Helen in the height of her charms and winning humor, Leigh Murray as Clifford,

and Wallack as Master Walter, — the former in Sheridan Knowles's odd phrase, 'a d——d picturesque fellow,' and the latter, according to the same eccentric authority, 'the best Hunchback ever seen; I never understood the character before.' The manner in which Julia's face was made up in this play, with its youthful freshness and comeliness, was perfectly wonderful to those who had seen Charlotte in private life, and to whom, delightful as the woman and the artist were, her plainness and the almost strange cut of her features were familiar. But just as

'Pritchard was genteel and Garrick six feet high,'

so Charlotte Cushman was lovely, elegant, youthful, and *espiègle*.

"Time will not serve, even if I were capable of doing any justice to my recollections of her varied gifts and powers, and of the parts wherein she displayed them; all these crowd on my memory as bright visions of the past, which, with no unkindly feeling toward the younger artists of to-day, we cannot expect again to see; for the system of things is changed, and trained companies of Shakespearian artists can hardly now be assembled.

"There never was a spark of jealousy or disdain toward her sister or brother artists in Charlotte's character, none more ready to praise, none more happy in being able to give encouragement to her fellows. But of late years how could she fail to see and lament over the poor material put upon the stage, and the uneducated, ignorant men and women who jostled the best actors and actresses off the boards?

"When I saw her last, at Hampstead, it was this which made her shrewdly observe, with mixed sarcasm and judgment, that she began to doubt whether she ever had really been an artist, whether her rules and practice had not been all wrong, and whether the rising generation had not discovered the true art of acting. 'True,' she observed, 'we of the old school endeavored to "hold the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own features, scorn her own image, and the

very age and body of the time his form and pressure." So Hamlet had taught us, and so we tried to act; but our houses grew empty, sensation drama and all the tribe of burlesque fill the houses, and if Shakespeare is played it is but to display a single actor's genius or folly. We must have been altogether wrong — *or* the public.'"

In March of 1848 her sister Susan was married to Dr. James Sheridan Muspratt of Liverpool, and left the stage.

In August, 1849, she sailed again for America, fulfilling engagements throughout the country, and everywhere followed by the prestige of her European celebrity. One or two extracts from letters are all we have to illustrate this period.

Chorley writes in March, 1850:—

"Though my note had not reached you when you wrote to me from New Orleans on the 7th of last month, I hope you have received it ere this, since it would remind you that the 'reciprocity is not all on one side,' but that I can remember you as well as you me. With all my heart do I rejoice in the accounts you send me of your thrivings and successes. I heard as much from some of your friends here, but I am truly glad to see the thing accredited in your own handsome handwriting; only don't stop in America till you get thirty thousand pounds, because perhaps by that time you will not need England again; and that I should not like, since I shall never see America; and if you are very long of coming, you will hardly see me, I think, *so worn to the very bones of my mind* do I feel, without the possibility of slackening in the exertion to keep on my legs. You had small need to tell me how you found America. I am convinced, having read every line I could read on the subject, seen and conversed and made friends with many Americans, that I have a true, clear idea of what I should find there. At all events, 't is just what you describe. I should enjoy the originals which such a new land must yield;

but I shall never see them, — no, not if Mr. Barnum would give me one thousand pounds for 'Duchess Elinor'! I am getting old and sore afraid; very much like the 'Cottage Maid' in the circulating libraries, 'all in pieces.' Well, I am enchanted at your prosperity."

In this letter Mr. Chorley makes a strong appeal to her in behalf of his play, which was afterwards produced on her return to England in 1854, but did not make a success.

In a letter under date March 27, 1850, New Orleans, we find it stated, that although theatrical business was dull throughout the South, Miss Cushman's engagement was immensely successful; a longer engagement than was ever played by a star before. In those days very long runs were not as common as they have since become. The nightly average of receipts was greater than even Mr. Macready's. From New Orleans she went to Savannah, Charleston, Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York.

In July, in consequence of news of a friend's serious illness in England, she took six weeks from her engagements and crossed the ocean, returning on the 4th of August, and remaining in the States until May 15, 1852, when she took her farewell at the old Broadway Theatre, acting in the interval at Brougham's Lyceum and at the Astor Place Opera-House.

In July of this year we find her in Liverpool, on a visit to Seaforth Hall; in August at the Isle of Wight; in September and October alternating between London and Liverpool. On October 15th she made her first visit to Rome, in company with several travelling friends; among them Miss Harriet Hosmer, who was then on her way to study art in Rome, and Grace Greenwood, the well-known writer. The winter was spent in the ways so well known

to all tourists, with the most earnest enjoyment and unceasing activity in the pursuit of it, varied by sittings to artists, among them to Mr. W. Page, whose portrait of her is now in Newport. It was much praised at the time, and is undoubtedly an excellent bit of color, but as a likeness it is decidedly weak. No artist but the *sun* (notably the last photograph by Gutekunst, of Philadelphia) was ever able to give the mingled strength and sweetness of her wonderful face. Page's portrait, however, inspired a true poet and artist, the late Paul Akers, with the following tribute, which, as it embodies the feeling which *ought* to have existed in the portrait, may not be uninteresting to transcribe here. Taking it with reference to her, it much more fitly suggests the Gutekunst portrait, which is unequalled in its embodiment of all that the great and noble face had become through its years of labor, of triumph, and of suffering.

PAGE'S PORTRAIT OF CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

"It is a face rendered impressive by the grandest repose, — a repose that pervades the room and the soul; a repose not to be mistaken for serenity, but which is, however, in equilibrium. No brilliancy of color, no elaboration of accessories, attracts the attention of the observer. There is no need of these. But he who is worthy of the privilege stands suddenly conscious of a presence such as the world has rarely known. He feels that the embodiment before him is the record of a great past as well as the reflection of a proud present, — a past in which the soul has ever borne on and through and above all obstacles of discouragement and temptation to a success which was its inheritance. He sees, too, the possibilities of the near future; how from that fine equipoise the soul might pass out into rare manifestations, appearing in the sweetness and simplicity of a little child, in the fearful tumultuousness of 'Lady Macbeth,' in the passionate tenderness of

'Romeo,' or in the gothic grandeur of the Scotch sorceress; in the love of kindred, in the fervor of friendship, and in the nobleness of the truest womanhood."

This was written twenty-seven years ago, and, read in the light of the life which followed after, may be looked upon as an almost prophetic utterance, and a striking manifestation of the true poetic instinct which enabled the writer to see beyond the pictured face into the noble individuality which it sought to interpret, and to *feel* all its possibilities in the coming years through the atmosphere which it created in the painter's studio. This is the supreme gift which fuses all the arts in the alembic of its own consciousness, and brings forth the pure ore of truth and beauty to the light of day. It may be said also that "the fine equipoise of soul," passing out in rare manifestations, found its ultimate and consummate flowering in the dramatic readings, — wherein the artist, freed from all surrounding lets and hindrances, stood alone, acted alone, and filled each rôle, passing "from grave to gay, from lively to severe," with a power, a pathos, and a humor unsurpassed in this or any foregone period.

There are many portraits of her in and out of character. An early one by Sully is interesting, though with the same fault of want of character, which never could have been the fault of her face. In this head she looks to be about seventeen, and there is a singular brightness and sunniness of aspect; the eyes are lovely, and look forth trustingly and hopefully. Artists who attempted her likeness erred either on one side or the other; they made her either insipidly weak, in the effort to soften certain points, which were certainly not *artistically* beautiful, or they lost sight of the tenderness and sweetness in the strength, and exaggerated the latter. It was very easy to make an ugly likeness of her, but those who did so saw only the outside of her.

Toward the spring of this year she made the usual excursion to Naples and its neighborhood, returning by way of Civita Vecchia to Leghorn and Florence. In Florence she saw the Brownings, whose acquaintance she had made some time before in Paris. Leaving Italy, she returned by way of the Italian lakes and Switzerland to Paris, arriving on the 5th of July in England, and making her usual visit to Great Malvern, to get a little building up by water-treatment for the London season of 1854.

Commencing December 15 at Liverpool, she acted during January, February, and March in London. In March "The Duchess Elinor" was produced and acted only two nights. In April she acts again in Liverpool and in May in London, Birmingham, and Sheffield. In June she makes an excursion to Paris, for the pleasure of a young friend whose health was delicate, and was recalled to England by the illness and death of Mrs. Muspratt's youngest child, Ida.

I find among her letters one to her sister on the death of this child, which is so full of tender sadness and brave submission that I cannot omit it.

"I grieve from my heart, dear Sue, for all your sadness and depression; but can you not think that God's will is best, that perhaps you needed something to draw you nearer to heaven, and so this best and purest and dearest was taken to remind you that only such can inherit the kingdom of heaven in all its purity, and that your whole aim must be to fit yourself to be able to join her there? That the taking away of this lovely child was for some good and wise purpose, though through our earthly eyes we cannot recognize it, we are bound in humble confidence to trust and believe; and in striving more to do God's will, in aiming for a more truly Christian life, we shall show that we feel his wisdom and power, and are willing to bow unto it, eager only to be fitted to rejoin her at the last.

How hard it would be to die, if we had all the joys and happiness that we could desire here! The dews of autumn penetrate into the leaves and prepare them for their fall. But for the dews of sorrow upon the heart, we should never be prepared for the sickle of the destroyer. And so does God wean us from this world by taking what we love most to his world; and the purer he takes them, the nearer are they to his glorious presence, the more blessed and blessing angels, who ever see his face. Could you wish her back from this? Could you be willing that she should ever know again the chances of such suffering as you witnessed in her little agonized frame? No, I am sure not; and if one of God's angels should give you the choice, you would say with uplifted hands, 'Keep her, O God, from the suffering and sorrow she knew even in her little life; keep her ever near thee!' And you must try not to grieve too deeply, for sorrow in such a case is almost rebellion. Feel, as you kneel to God morning and night, that it is her spirit which takes you there, and ever mediates between you and him. Feel that she is ever near you; and if there can be a torture hereafter, it must be in seeing the hearts of those we loved and who best loved us bleeding for our loss. That you will and must miss her is most certain, and this will be wherever you may be situated. Even I, who saw so little of her, never think of any of you without missing her smile and pretty ways. How much more, then, must you! But if you suffer it to be a means of bringing you nearer to God and heaven, you will find in time that it will prove a tender rather than a harrowing sorrow, and you will be indeed saying, 'Thy will be done.' I know it seems almost folly in me to attempt to write you upon such a subject, but I have felt so much, — do feel so much for you in it, — that I must say what little I can to induce you not to despond, and to trust to a higher Power than we can understand, but who ordains everything for our good, and who chastens in love and merciful kindness."

The summer of 1854 is spent between London, Brigh-

ton, and the Isle of Wight, visiting friends and making various excursions. During September, October, and November she is acting in Dublin and other places, making an extended tour in the provinces. At Brighton, in December, she dines with the Duke of Devonshire, and reads "Henry VIII." to a distinguished circle.

In January of this year she took possession of her delightful home in London, Bolton Row, Mayfair, where for some years she dispensed the most charming and genial hospitality. The musical parties she gave there are well remembered by many. All that London afforded of best in that and kindred arts found there a congenial field for their exercise. One notable entertainment was a dinner which she gave to Ristori, on the occasion of her first visit to England in 1856. She had met Ristori in Paris, seen her act, and had a great admiration for her, as she had also for Salvini, and for Italian acting generally. She preferred the natural school of acting as distinct from the conventional. She was herself a splendid example of this school, notwithstanding her long stage experience; and the Italians, who are born actors, even in private life, always delighted her. In saying they are born actors, even in private life, I do not mean to say they are actors in the sense of being hypocrites or false, but simply that they "suit the action to the word and the word to the action," and are free, untrammelled, and graceful in all their movements, so much so as to have become above any other people types of the picturesque in manner, gesture, and attitude. The poorest peasant in the Campagna cannot take an ungraceful attitude; and you will see them standing, leaning on their long poles or shrouded in their ragged blankets, perfect pictures, relieved against the wondrous colors of earth and sky. Through this irresistible attraction toward the absolutely

true, Miss Cushman preferred Ristori to Rachel. They were great friends, meeting and communicating on some plane known only to their two selves, but apparently quite satisfactory to both. Miss Cushman never had the advantage of a knowledge of foreign tongues; but to observe from a distance these two in conversation was quite beautiful, the animation and interest of each seemingly supplying all deficiencies. Afterwards when residence in Rome had given Miss Cushman some knowledge of Italian, Ristori came there, and their first meeting took place unexpectedly on the Pincian. Ristori was walking, and Miss Cushman descended from her carriage and ran to meet her, pouring forth a warm greeting in Italian. Ristori held up her hands, exclaiming, "Brava! brava!" with enthusiasm, and then both united in a hearty laugh. Charlotte Cushman said, in describing this scene to a friend, "I don't know what I said, but I threw all the Italian I had at her pell-mell, and she understood me, as she always does." The Ristori dinner was unique in its way; everything *Italianissimo* as far as the resources of London would permit, — cooks, waiters, dishes, all Italian; the chief cook turning himself into a waiter for the pleasure of looking at Ristori. The table was decorated with the Italian colors, and the dress of the hostess also displayed "the mystical tricolor bright," —

> "Red for the patriot's blood,
> Green for the martyr's crown,
> White for the dew and the rime,
> When the morning of God comes down." *

During these later years in England we have but a barren record of her movements and doings, not much more than names and dates and places. Letters are

* Mrs. Browning.

almost wholly wanting. We know briefly but surely that she was living a life of intense activity, full of work, equally full of genial human interest and sympathy. The bare record of letters written and received fills us with wonder that so much could have been done, and so much which came out of the fulness of a great soul and warm heart could have been suffered to disappear so utterly! Yet so it seems to be in this planet, —

> "Our lives are like the print which feet
> Have made on Tempe's desert strand;
> Soon as the rising tide shall beat,
> All trace will vanish from the sand."

The tide of other interests, of other excitements, effaces our impress, however deep it may have been, and we live no longer, except perhaps in one or two faithful hearts.

I will make a few extracts from a sort of diary or memoranda which she always kept. It is only a record, as I have said, of the mere outside of her life, kept with a neatness, clearness, and punctuality entirely her own. She was, as all the world knows, a clever woman of business; and it is useful in its way, it fixes many things, but it is like the dry bones of a once living, loving organism, from which all warmth and breath have departed.

From February 28 to April 13, 1855, we find her acting her usual round of characters in the provinces. Through May, at the Haymarket Theatre, London; in June, at Liverpool, and again in London, acting for Buckstone's benefit. In July she makes the tour of the English lakes, goes to Ripon, Fountain's Abbey, Skipton, Bolton, etc.; in August, to Devonshire, Lynton, Ilfracombe, Glastonbury, Bristol, Cheltenham, and Malvern; then to Worcester, Bolton Abbey, Ripon, and Newcastle, where on October 1 she acts; also at Sunderland, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and back to London, where she

fulfils a month's engagement at the Haymarket, and after acts at Sheffield, Wolverhampton, and Bristol.

In January, 1856, she again acts at the Haymarket in "She Stoops to Conquer," after which, up to the end of March, we find her occupied with social life in London, breaking from this for another short engagement at the Haymarket, Birmingham, Sadler's Wells, Norwich, and Yarmouth, and an excursion to the Wicklow Lakes, Killarney, and all the various points of interest in Ireland.

September 6 she acts in Dublin; October 1, visits Edinburgh, Melrose, Dryburgh Abbey, Abbotsford, Stirling, the Trosachs, etc., alternating work with play in her usual energetic manner.

With this specimen of the diary, I think I shall leave it, or only refer to it when some name or date is needed in another connection. I give thus much of it here to show the immense activity and fulness of her life at this time, which was shortly to be merged in the comparatively greater repose of her Roman period.

But even this diary fails by some chance for the winter of 1856–57, though we know that she passed it in Rome. A note of farewell from Mr. Chorley, dated November, 1856, is interesting as giving an instance of Miss Cushman's never-failing kindness, exercised always in ways which most nearly touched the hearts of the recipients. In this note he asks her to visit the English burial-ground in Rome, and bring him a leaf, a blade of grass, from the tomb of a friend there, of whom he says: —

"In her I lost the dearest, kindest friend I ever had. It is weak work, relic-gathering, but the greater part of my life is filled with thoughts of the dead and gone, and I don't indulge the weakness often."

Another letter in April, 1856, refers again to the subject. He says: —

"I was truly glad to see yours of the 10th; not that if no letter had come I should have felt myself forgotten, but because it would be difficult to make any one understand the refreshment which a little kindly intercourse is to a person whose life is so solitary as mine; and so I am perhaps disproportionately thankful for being remembered visibly. I thank you affectionately for your woman's tact and kindness in caring for the grave I asked after. She who lies there was one of the truest and most exquisite natures I have ever approached, and to whom I owe more than I can ever pay. The tears I have wept over your kindness have done me good."

It was in the winter of 1856–57 that the compiler of these memoirs first made Miss Cushman's acquaintance, and from that time the current of their two lives ran, with rare exceptions, side by side. We were in Rome, as "travellers and pilgrims" to the famous city. She had already passed one winter there, — that of 1853, — but this was my first experience.

She came late; and her advent had been heralded by many warm friends as something which would add greatly to the pleasures of the season. We soon found that the voice of fame had not exaggerated her attractions. No salon seemed complete without her, and her potent charm enhanced all the delights of the place. I remember our first meeting was on the occasion of a reading given by a gentleman who, having become possessed with the idea that he resembled Shakespeare, supplemented the attraction by appearing in the costume of the Shakespearian epoch. We were much impressed by the simple and kindly interest Miss Cushman took in the entertainment, not fully realizing then how the crude effort must have struck upon her cultivated artistic sense. It was one of her chief attributes, as it is always an attribute of true genius, to be able to enjoy, without too close analysis, any

effort, even in her own art, which had the least flavor of the true in it, or even an aspiration toward it; and when that was wanting, her feeling was never one of harsh or unfriendly criticism.

She had a party of friends with her at this time, as usual, and was full of active effort for their pleasure. It was a busy winter. Rome had not then even a prevision of the changes which have since been so strangely wrought. She was in all her glory, as the religious metropolis of the world, and passed through all her ecclesiastical phases, with the exact precision of a divine law, "not one jot or one tittle of which could be abated without eternal confusion thereby resulting." Rome was then what she can never be again. More happy, more prosperous she may be under liberal rule, but equally interesting she can never be. Even then, those who had known her still earlier were deploring innovations and changes trifling in comparison with what has since taken place; but to those who saw the wondrous city then for the first time, for the first time tasted its magic circle of delights, it was hard to find a flaw or feel a disappointment. Miss Cushman entered into all its pleasures with a keen appreciation, which imparted its own ardent zest to all with whom she came in contact. She was then in the fulness and fruition of all her powers. There has been much question as to her personal appearance. Those who loved her well never made any question about it. There was a winning charm about her far above mere beauty of feature, a wondrous charm of expression and sympathy which took all hearts and disarmed criticism. She had, moreover, many of the requisites for real beauty, — a fine, stately presence, a movement always graceful and impressive, a warm, healthy complexion, beautiful, wavy, chestnut hair, and the finest eyes in the world. Go where she might, she was always

the person whose individuality dominated that of all others. The harmonious combination in her personality of great intellectual force with extreme social geniality, sweetness, and sympathy, produced an attraction which was irresistible (none but the coldest and most unsympathetic natures resisted its force), and it was as powerful with the poor and lowly as with the high born and bred.

Another marked impression Miss Cushman made was the entire absence of any reminder of the professional in private life; neither in dress nor manner could this be detected in her. She was always studiously neat in her dress, beautifully natural and true in her manner. Only when she spoke one was refreshed by hearing the same ease and perfectness of delivery for which she was so noted upon the stage. Nature seemed to have formed her throat, lungs, and mouth for the most perfect elocution, and given the voice a volume and a power of inflection which was able to fill any space. This great power was tested in her later years by one going about to different extreme points of the Academy of Music in Philadelphia, — a building capable of holding comfortably three thousand people, and, filled to its utmost capacity, five thousand, as it often was at her readings; everywhere the grand voice penetrated without effort, and could be heard as well in its lowest as in its highest intonation.

The singular absence from Miss Cushman's personality of any suggestion of the stage — if we may so express it — was most remarkable in one who had lived upon it so long and served such an apprenticeship to it. It was a part of her royal birthright, that she was equal to any position, and would have adorned any station; as it was, she created for herself a station which surpassed the adventitious advantages of greater rank and wealth. With

this inherent superiority was combined a singular, almost childlike simplicity, a capacity for enjoying life in all its phases, of accepting with equal philosophy the roughness or the smoothness of the way. And yet philosophy is hardly the word for it, if philosophy can be confounded with indifference. Indifference she never knew; it had no part in her full, intense, earnest nature; whatever of wrong she could help, whatever she could make better or happier for others or herself, to that she bent the full force of her capacious soul, and the rough way became smooth, the difficult paths easy, the barren effort fruitful, as if by magic. Nothing was too great or too small for her to undertake to serve a friend. She would bestow as much personal care and effort in the endeavor to right the wrongs of a poor seamstress who had fallen among the Philistines in Rome, as she ever gave to the needs of the highest among her acquaintances. This was only one instance of many of the same kind, which were so much a matter of course with her that the knowledge of them rarely passed beyond herself and her faithful "Sallie," who was, as she often said, "her right hand"; and only in this way did her right hand know what her left hand did. But the incense of these good deeds filled her life with an aroma of faithful remembrance and devotion, taking shape, whenever opportunity served, in some little gift, the best in the power of the donor, mostly flowers, in the instance of the poor seamstress above mentioned, a specialty of pressed flowers was the form in which the greatful heart uttered itself. Many instances of this kind might be recorded here. One in especial occurs to me, as very characteristic. This was in Cincinnati, on one of her professional tours, during these later years, undertaken by the advice of physicians, and much interrupted by attacks of sudden and serious illness. On this occa-

sion she was ill in bed, heavy with a sort of stupor which was a symptom of her malady. A knock came at the door of the room; going to it, the attendant found there a respectable-looking woman, who seemed in great distress. She told a sad story: she had been robbed of her purse; she was on her way home, after nursing a sick daughter in another city. She was a stranger without friends in Cincinnati; she had seen Miss Cushman's name in the papers, had heard of her noble and generous heart, etc. Not wishing to disturb the patient, a moment's hesitation took place; but a voice from the bed asked, "What is it?" The story was told. "Her voice is honest," she said; "give her what she needs."

The following letter is inserted as another instance showing how Miss Cushman was constantly dealing with evil wherever she found it, and never "in fear or shame failing to follow the dictates of her heart." The writer of this was a young and interesting woman moving in the upper ranks of life. It speaks for itself.

"MY DEAR MISS CUSHMAN: Thank you for your kindness in speaking openly to me on a subject from which all others have shrunk. I will do my best to merit your — well, what shall I say? not affection, for I have no claim on it more than the pen with which I write, and your respect must, if you ever had any, have vanished some time ago. However, I will try to win some good opinion from you. Now for a résumé of your letter: 1st, I know a good deal more than you think of your character, and that simply from watching you very often when you neither saw nor heard me. You sat before me for three Sundays in church, and during the sermons (stupid enough) I had at least two hours to compare you with a mass of half-educated people, living on from season to season with no higher idea than 'pour passer le temps.' Put any one of these women in your place and they would have

been like so many half-fledged birds, trying to fly; while you, gifted by God with unusual powers, rose on the wing. Perhaps, to use Browning's word, you

"Starved, feasted, despaired,"

but you *succeeded.*

"2d. I know I have a good, well-grounded character, and that I am not a fool. I know also that I have 'no consistency of purpose,' and no 'energy.' But I know that both were sacrificed in the beginning to at *least* a wish to do what was right.

"3d. 'To be degraded in one's own mind is the worst of all.' In that you say only too truly; but I am not going to be degraded *any longer*, in my own mind or otherwise. I am rather of the opinion of the author of 'Guy Livingstone,' that 'a fault is worse than a failure.' I can forgive the first, but despise the second; and when once I learn to *despise myself* I am more than half-way cured. If I can serve you now or ever, command me, and hold me always gratefully yours."

But to return to Rome. During this winter Miss Cushman sang often in society; her once powerful organ, in losing its compass and variety, had lost nothing of its power of expression. It was still a supreme gift, as it continued to the end of her life. It was only *one* of her means of giving forth the richness and depth of her nature, and it comprehended the same universality. It was very effective in the grander styles of composition, especially so where she could bring to bear her early training in church music. Friends will call to mind the touching and solemn theme by Jones Very, beginning, "Wilt Thou not visit me?" which we called "The Chant," and which was either an adaptation or a suggestion from one of the Gregorian chants. It was singularly adapted to her style of singing, or, as she herself called it, "declaiming to music."

"Mary, call the Cattle Home," by Charles Kingsley, was another remarkable performance, given with a depth of pathos, fervor, and intensity which made the blood thrill. Her *repertoire* of ballads and songs adapted to her voice was quite extensive. Afterwards, when she had established her home in Rome and her salon became one of the chief attractions of the winter, many will recall those Saturday evenings when, after entertaining her guests with all the best musical talent that Rome could furnish, the evening was never considered complete without her own contributions, and a chosen few would always remain to insist upon the "Irish song" as the necessary finale to the evening.

These "Irish songs" were always kept for "the fit audience, though few," who could never be content to go away without one. Like her Irish stories, they were unique. With the first note of the accompaniment the spirit and rollicking drollery of all the Emerald-Islanders entered into her; not a word lost, not a point or witty turn slurred over or failing to express its entire meaning, and all enhanced by her own thorough enjoyment of the fun. Of these songs the favorite, and undoubtedly the wittiest and best, was one called "Father Molloy," by Samuel Lover. It turns upon the illness of a certain Paddy McCabe, and the efforts made by the priest to make him appreciate the value of "repintance" and forgiveness of his enemies.

"'For widout your forgiveness and likewise repintance,
You'll ne'er go to heaven, and that is my sintence.'"

Paddy is not so low but he can argue the matter; he exhausts every form of special pleading, of wit, of fun, of drollery, constantly imploring for the blessing, which is sternly refused except upon the conditions aforesaid.

At last he comes to the conclusion that he must forgive.

"'I forgive — everybody,' says Pat, wid a groan,
'Except — that big vagabone, Micky Malone;
And him I 'll murder if ever I can' — "

Here the priest breaks in, peremptorily, —

"'Widout your forgiveness and likewise repintance,
You 'll ne'er go to heaven, and that is my sintence.'"

Upon which Paddy wonders very much how the priest can think of mentioning heaven anyway in the same breath with that "blackguard, Malone." Finally he winds up with the following irresistibly Irish conclusion: —

"'Well, since I 'm hard pressed and I must forgive,
I forgive — if I die; but as sure as I live,
That ugly blackguard I will surely desthroy;
And now for your blessin', swate Father Molloy.'"

This song, as I have said, was a great favorite, and deservedly so, as those who recall it will readily admit; but there were sometimes guests present who might not relish its freedom, and what might seem something in it of a burlesque upon what were to them sacred things. Any chance of such offence Miss Cushman always carefully avoided. On one occasion a young English priest was present, and she refused to sing the song until after his departure. In due time he said "good night," and soon after the rich notes of "Father Molloy" rose upon the air. He, however, had not gone; something detained him in the antechamber; he stopped to listen; delighted and amused, he stayed the song out, and the next day he called to express his pleasure, and to hope that he might speedily have a better opportunity of hearing it again.

This winding up of the Saturday evenings came to be at last a recognized necessity, and the fame of them spread abroad among our country men and women in Rome, until at last the house could hardly contain the numbers who thronged there. All came, even those who had no special

title to admittance further than that they claimed on the ground of being Americans. It was sometimes curious to see the family groups who would file in, one after the other, the pater or mater familias, making a little speech of explanation, and then formally presenting the rest, always received kindly by the pleasant hostess, who had but one face for all her guests. It was delightful to see her in the midst of them, with a kind word, a ready repartee, a hearty laugh for one and the other. It was a thing to be noted, that Miss Cushman always looked taller than any one else, even when she was not really so, the carriage of her person and her marked personality seeming to give her this distinction.

Even up to the last years of her life she continued to give the same pleasure with her songs, forgetting herself and her pain in the *outgiving* of herself, which was her mission and her life. Some of her latest strength was given with wonderful intensity and pathos to Gounod's fine sacred compositions, — "There is a Green Hill far Away," and "Nazareth."

The winter of 1856 – 57 passed swiftly, and only closed too soon. Miss Cushman made with her party the usual Lenten excursion to Naples and its neighborhood, returning for Holy Week, and immediately after to England. But before leaving arrangements were decided upon for the Roman home, which was not, however, to be an accomplished fact until the winter of 1859, she having made engagements for an intermediate season in America. On September 5 of this year she sailed to meet these engagements.

Here are a few scraps of notes of this period, trifling in themselves, but interesting as referring to her, and showing the universal feeling of her goodness, how "the hearts leaped kindly back to kindness." One is from a young friend, and begins, "My Minnie." They all felt the motherly, protective atmosphere she bore about her.

"My Minnie: So you start to-morrow over the great deep; and if you knew how sad I felt in seeing the last of you, you would not have wondered at my indulging in a little private roar on my own account, as I did in Mrs. S——'s hall. You know me well enough to understand and believe me when I say that the home love, the power of forming and clinging to domestic ties, is the deepest capacity in my nature; and I have not felt or taken lightly the constant tenderness you have shown me the last two years, and the way in which you have made me free of your hearthstone. It has been a great disappointment to me not to see you off, and I felt thoroughly the kindness which made you want me to come to Liverpool, but it was better not. My own Minnie, don't go and stay away twenty months. My love to Sallie; say farewell to the dear little woman for me, and tell her not to get married in America.

"Your loving child,

"B."

Here is a bright little note from Miss Cushman herself to another B., also a young friend:—

"Bless you, dearest Belle, for your kind little note. I wondered whether you would write to me, and now wish you would call me anything but *Miss Cushman*. I laughed at N. for calling mine 'a godmother's box of goodies'; but you shall call me 'godmother' if you can find nothing better than 'Miss Cushman'; and yet there is something formidable in *mother*, therefore it shall be 'Madre Mia,' and I will do what I can in a small way to prove my right to the title. I wish I could anticipate all your wants as mothers can and do, but I will do my best. That naughty 'brown eyes' did not send me my snowdrops, only told me *you* were going to send them. *You* tell me *she* is going to send them; so between you I don't get my deserts. I have been doing such a lot of things, as busy as the 'old gentleman in a gale of wind'; and they say no B is ever so busy as he under these circumstances. I am as tired as I should be if I had—nothing to do. But

to-morrow I am going to Croyden for a couple of days, and perhaps that may recruit me a bit, for Mrs. D—— says I am to write no letters while I am with her; so that I am to have perfect rest, with the exception of *gossip;* and it is so foolish of people to imagine such can be *rest.* Everything I do in this world I do *hard,* even to loving my friends. On Friday I return to town to go and hear Costa's 'Oratorio of Eli,' with my handsome friend Chorley. Last night we went to Mrs. L's, where we met Mrs. Martin, late Miss Faucit, and a host of smaller fry. Tell F——, with my love, I have made up the house-bills each week in *ten minutes,* but have no money left to pay them with; my fortune is exhausted, all my trinkets up the spout, and I expect every day to be arrested for debt. I have spent all the money she left me, and don't know where to get any more. Wilmot finds me 'the easiest, but the most forgetfullest of missusses.' I go out and forget to order the dinner, and am followed to the carriage door for 'Horders, please, mem.' My brain wool-gathers frightfully, which gives me hope I may not be bald, even though I should lose my hair. God bless you, my child.

"I am ever your faithfully affectionate

"MADRE."

CHAPTER VI.

"I count myself in nothing else so happy
As in a soul remembering my good friends."
Richard II.

"Heaven doth with us as we with torches do;
Not light them for themselves: for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 't were all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touched,
But to fine issues: nor nature never lends
The smallest scruple of her excellence,
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor,
Both thanks and use."
Measure for Measure.

THE winter and part of the summer of this year were passed in the States, acting all about the country with her usual success. Letters and notices of this period are wanting; the record of names, places, and dates are in the diary, but without comment. After her return to England, July 7, she made some delightful excursions, after devoting six weeks to Malvern; going to Gloucester, Ross, and Monmouth, by way of the River Wye; visiting Raglan Castle, and seeing Tintern Abbey by moonlight. September was passed between London and Brighton. On October 5 she left for Rome, going by way of Paris, Strasburg, and Basle, through Switzerland to the Italian lakes, and by Genoa, Spezzia, and Florence to Rome.

The season was chiefly occupied in fitting up her apart-

ment at No. 38 Via Gregoriana, where she gave her first reception on January 19, 1859. This house — or rather two houses, Nos. 38 and 40 — is considered, and justly, one of the choice situations of Rome. The street runs directly up to the famous promenade of the Pincian, and the house is but a pleasant ten minutes' walk from that charming locality. Its outlook is, or was at that time, unsurpassed in extent and interest. Since then many changes have taken place, which may have obstructed in some measure this view; but then from most of the front windows the eye ranged over a wide prospect, taking in most of the picturesque outlines of the city, St. Peter's looming large and grand in front, with a limitless expanse of open Campagna, and the marvellous sky of Rome for background.

Directly in front lay the pleasant parterres and greenery of the Mignanelli Gardens. The palace itself stood lower down on the level of the Piazza d'Espagna. Above all these buildings towered the sculptured Madonna of the column of the Immaculate Conception; and to the left a far more beautiful object, the corrugated roof and quaint tower of the ancient church of St. Andrea delle Frate, where, from immemorial time, hosts of rooks had clustered and cawed and fed, whose sage and wise proceedings were a source of great interest to some members of the household. Every evening, exactly as the clock of the church struck six, after great note of preparation and much noise and discussion, the main body of the birds took flight for their night-quarters on the stone-pines of the Villa Borghese. They had leaders and conductors of this movement, whose business it plainly was to preserve order and muster in all the stragglers. After the main flock were fairly started these returned, flew round the tower, and summoned, with loud and peremptory caws, any dilatory ones who might have lingered. This they repeated sev-

eral times, until all had been gathered in. Then another grand powwow took place among the trees, their dusky plumage turned all to palpable gold or copper by the level rays of the setting sun. It was impossible not to speculate upon these regular proceedings, and the question naturally arose, whether the spirits of the dead generations of monks who had inhabited the church below might not now be still revisiting "the glimpses of the moon" in this appropriate guise, unwilling quite to leave the scenes of their earthly pilgrimage, and still interested and occupied with the churchly routine through which they had lived and died. In the enumeration of objects seen from this fine point of view, I must not forget glimpses here and there of the windings of the classic river, gleaming out from among the thickly clustered houses and churches. The famous Castle of St. Angelo, the heights of San Pietro in Montorio, the lofty sculptured gateway of the Villa Pamfili Doria, and behind, against the horizon, its noble grove of pines. The vast barn-like structure of St. Paul's without the walls, and the Protestant Cemetery, were visible to the right of the picture, and nearer by, the large and rather angular structure of the Quirinal Palace, with its gardens and groups of fine old trees, the gray shell of the Colosseum, the Capitol with its lofty and beautiful tower, and the low round dome of the Pantheon. In the midst a mass of palaces, churches, and private dwellings, many of the highest historical interest, all with a certain noble picturesqueness, due partly to their rich and sombre coloring, and partly to the deep blue shadow and soft golden light in which they lie.

They are interspersed everywhere with gardens, with noble trees shooting high into the blue air, with a wealth and luxuriance of trailing foliage breaking the harsh angles and softening down

"The hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and filling up,
As 't were, anew the gaps of centuries,
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not."

Within Miss Cushman's house the charm was different, but in its way as great. A glow of warmth and comfort, combined with a certain elegance, pervaded the pleasant rooms, and who of the many who enjoyed the hospitality of that house can forget the genial, cordial hostess, her kind face, her pleasant voice, her appreciation of all that was best in her guest, sending him away with an agreeable consciousness of having been more charming than he had ever thought himself capable of being before.

Miss Cushman's apartment at first consisted only of the first floor of No. 38, which she herself fitted up and furnished. Afterwards, when more room was required, the second and third floors were taken in addition. Still later, when it became necessary to have larger space for entertaining, the next door No. 40, was added to the establishment, doors were opened between the two houses, and it became a very delightful, convenient place of residence. The reception-rooms were not large, nor were there many of them; but there was an air of *homeiness*, if one may coin a word, rarely seen in the apartments of Rome, which are mostly either small, bare, and inconvenient, or else coldly spacious and splendid, with no end of perfectly useless, uninhabitable rooms.

This home was a genuine one, and so grew every year more and more in harmony with the true hospitable nature of its mistress. Its walls gradually became covered with choice pictures and such sculpture as there was space for; but its chief beauty consisted in its antique carved furniture, its abundance of books, and the patent

fact that every part and parcel of it was for daily use, and nothing for mere show; so that every one who came into it felt at once its peculiar charm, and exclaimed, "O, this is like home!" All those who have experienced the sense of strangeness and loneliness which besets one in a foreign land will readily recognize this element, and many will remember it with heartfelt gratitude.

The back walls of these houses were painted in fresco on the outside, said to be by a painter of some note, and the windows looked out into a garden, rude, but quaint and picturesque, as all Italian gardening is. A mingling of fragments of antique marbles, some set into the rough plaster walls without much regard to symmetry of arrangement, but very suggestive, and often masterly; bits of broken columns, standing here and there in a mass of luxuriant vegetation, the rich green acanthus-leaves vying with their sculptured representatives on the shattered capitals; the indispensable well in one corner, with its innumerable conductors bringing down buckets from all quarters and every stage on long lines of iron wire or rod, filling the mind with astonishment how it was possible for each bucket to keep its own line of travel and avoid coming in contact with its neighbors. One peculiarity about this well was, that if you looked down it, you beheld far below in the bowels of the earth the surface of the water, and, to your astonishment, women coming and going, drawing the water from its source, and you recognized that it was a large reservoir, to which the well-mouth above was only an opening or conductor. Further investigation disclosed the fact that underneath all this neighborhood existed enormous excavations, eerie underground passages, giving access to this well, and Heaven only knew to what else beside, since we were none of us endowed with the proper groping antiquarian spirit to find out.

The houses which bounded the back view on the Via Sistina were occupied as studios and apartments, and presented to an inquiring mind a sufficiently entertaining prospect, since it is in the nature of Italians to live very much *en evidence*, and family affairs and interesting domestic events were freely discussed from window to window in the peculiar high-pitched not at all *musical* voices of the natives. It is a curious fact that the throats which so often give forth the most marvellous sounds in singing are rarely ever pleasant in speaking. They talk fast, and in a very high pitch, and have no idea whatever of the "golden empire of silence." They utter themselves like children, with the same abandon and unconsciousness, and are full of dramatic force and vivacity. Even although it is not *Lingua Toscana in bocca Romana*, the exquisite beauty and sweetness of the language cannot be disguised, and one is grateful, since they must chatter like parrots, it can be done in so sweet a tongue.

While upon the subject of Miss Cushman's home surroundings in Rome, — the object being to present as clear a picture as possible of that time, — a few words concerning the Italian servants may not be inappropriately inserted here. There are many who knew the household well who will thank me for these reminiscences; and those who did not will be glad of a record which may place more vividly before them the life of so noted and esteemed a contemporary.

Italians make excellent servants on the score of *humanity;* that is to say, however rascally they may be in many respects, they never fail to take a truly genuine interest in their employers, entering into the affairs of the family *con amore*, and, even while carrying on what they consider a perfectly justifiable system of plunder, conducting themselves in a genial and sympathetic way which makes one forgive them everything.

Custom and evil surroundings have trained them in habits of deception and peculation of a certain kind; but it is always strictly within the bounds of what they consider their perquisites. For example, in making purchases for you, they will take advantage of any opportunity to make their own little per centum, aided in this by the habits and institutions of the country. The system is profound and manifold, and there is no fathoming the depths of it; for ease and peace' sake you must wink at it. If you get a good cook you must be satisfied to know that you pay, not only an ostensible price for him, but also a duty upon every article he purchases for you.

I remember hearing of a case in which a gentleman undertook to grapple with and lay this domestic monster in its stronghold, the kitchen. He had an interview with his cook, and came to a thorough understanding with him. He agreed to pay him a sum sufficient to cover all the side issues in question, provided he would deal "on the square" with him. The man undertook to try the experiment; but at the end of a month came to say he could not afford it. He was obliged not only to prey upon his master, but to be preyed upon himself; and if he did not meet the expectations of others in the usual way, he could not answer for his life. This dishonesty, however, never takes the form of positive stealing. Money is always safe with them; you may leave it about, you may lose it, it will never be appropriated. So with anything in the shape of personal property. The house would be left during the summer months to the care of the servants, and not the smallest article was ever missed. The Italian cook — by name Augusto — was a *chef par excellence*, and quite a gentleman. He would come in the morning, get his orders, do his marketing, lay out and prepare his dinner, and then depart, returning only in time to cook it. His

kitchen was a sight to behold for neatness and order, and he himself was a picture, in his white jacket, apron, and cap. As soon as the dinner was cooked and served, again he became quite an elegant gentleman and went forth, probably, to *flaner* with the best on the Pincian, leaving all the minor details to the care of his myrmidon, who presided over the pots and pans. He may be said to have been a master of the æsthetics of cooking, for he had eliminated from it all its grossness and reduced it to a pure science, ruling serenely in the midst, and, even ladle in hand, abating no jot of dignity, but rather making that implement the symbol and token of the true sovereignty which the one achieves who can do anything thoroughly well.

The next important personage on the Italian staff was the waiter — or *major domo* — Antonio. A tall, well-made, remarkably good-looking, perfectly ignorant person in everything but his business. He could not read or write, yet his appearance and manners were so unexceptionable that more than one among our younger lady visitors declared that Antonio realized far more their ideal of what a Roman prince was like than any of the genuine article they had seen. This is curiously true about the Romans; the middle and more especially the lower classes are far more handsome — even noble in type — than the higher ranks. Why this should be so is hard to say, unless it is that the upper classes have lost the old classical type by intermarriage with other nationalities, whereas the Roman peasantry, and notably the inhabitants of the Trastevere, or other side of Tiber, have preserved their ancient lineaments remarkably, and are a very noble-looking race. They are unquestionably, though it may be too much on the material plane, a wonderfully fine, strikingly picturesque, and artistic-looking people. Their simple dignity

of bearing, which springs from utter unconsciousness of themselves, gives a certain nobility of aspect to the very poorest; no amount of poverty, even squalor, can conquer this innate charm. The old people are like Rembrandts and Teniers; time having done for them in the flesh what the skill of the artist accomplishes on canvas, — toning down. Antonio was not, however, one of the picturesque ones; he was too respectable, by association with his superiors he had ingrafted on his good looks an unmistakable gentility. "The Principe," he was called by our habituées. With all his imposing appearance, however, he was the merest child; his simplicity, real or pretended, was simply astounding; and he possessed in large measure the attractive Italian *bonhomie* and geniality. Italian servants are not to be kept at a distance; they do not understand it, and it makes them unhappy; they take a lively interest in the affairs of their family, — not only within but without the house, — and do not hesitate to offer opinions and suggest advice from which the evident kindly intention removes all suspicion of impertinence. The discussions which took place between Antonio and his mistress concerning household matters were remarkably entertaining and characteristic. Between her broken Italian and his very curious dialect the wonder grew, how any understanding was ever arrived it. But confusion of tongues never baffled either the one or the other; they had a mutual language of signs, when words failed, and being both "to the manner born," succeeded perfectly in understanding each other. I should rather say, in coming to an understanding; for Miss Cushman, after a long, patient, and exhausting effort, in which neither party ever admitted defeat to each other, would say, after Antonio's triumphant departure, "My dear, I have not understood one single word that man has been saying, — *not one single word!*"

Antonio was "a very much married man," having a wife three times his avoirdupois and ten times his weight of personality, a son who was the care and problem of his life, and a regular gradation of "olive branches," the parent stem throwing forth new shoots regularly every year.

Time and space will not permit more than passing mention of the various other domestic *personnaggi* of the household. Personages they all were, from Luisa the portress, who lived in her own peculiar den on the Piano Terreno, to Giovanni the coachman, who looked down upon her like a king, from his sublime eminence on the box. Luisa combined with her duties as doorkeeper a little dressmaking, a vast flood of gossip, and not a little duplicity and cunning, favoring visitors either with beaming smiles or torrid eruptions, as occasion served or matters did not go quite to her mind. The noise that Italians can make upon very slight provocation is something incredible. They get up with the suddenness of tropic tornadoes, and subside as quickly, leaving little or no destruction in their train, seldom bearing malice, or feeling in the least ashamed of their outbreaks. What nature prompts them to do or say seems to them the right thing, and they go in for it with simple straightforwardness. This seems to be one of the products of the priestly system, which tickets conscience and lays it away upon a shelf, to be taken down and overhauled only upon stated occasions. So poor easy conscience gets much out of practice, and can only be scared into action occasionally by the thunders of the Church.

There was also a sort of supplement to Antonio, called Antonuccio, or Little Antonio. He was a rather strange anomaly in Italy, an Italian and a Mulatto; very good-looking, and not darker than the average Neapolitan; but his blood betrayed itself in the unmistakable woolly

hair of the negro race. Notwithstanding his hair, however, which indeed is no obstacle in Europe, he was a lady-killer, and his place, finally, by reason of these fascinations, knew him no more.

Other members of this household there were, surely not unworthy of mention, inasmuch as they were admitted to as close companionship, and certainly were not less faithful and devoted, than the human creatures who composed it; at least in our estimation. Miss Cushman loved animals always, and especially dogs and horses. Among the former the most worthy of note was "Bushie," or rather "Bouche Dhu," or "black muzzle," her original Highland appellation. Bushie came from Edinburgh, brought by a friend, who was much impressed by the dog's behavior on the train. She was put in one place, and there remained without moving the whole journey. She was a very handsome blue Skye terrier, with the human eyes and attributes of that race. Her first appearance was not heralded with rapture by Sallie, for she had been neglected as to her coat, which hung in tangled mats all over her, and the orders were that she should be oiled all over and kept shut up for a time; and there was much care and vexation anticipated, and little prevision of the comfort which lay cushioned in the woolly treasure. So Sallie rather rebelled at the prospect; but Miss Cushman said, "Sallie, you will do your duty by the little dog." And then, to use Sallie's own words, "I carried her in my arms down stairs, and the little thing licked me all the way down, and by the time I got to the kitchen I was completely won over." This was the beginning of a deep friendship, devoted on both sides, which lasted, without flaw, for fourteen years; and, indeed, the friendship was not confined to Sallie and herself. The loving dog-heart took us all in, and never was perfectly content unless she could have us

all together. To her mistress she was perfectly devoted. Bushie's general demeanor was discreet and sensible in the extreme. We all thought she understood all that was said to her; and, more than that, she had a way of speaking for herself which was almost human. She loved driving passionately, and was the first one to announce the approach of the carriage; however sound asleep she seemed to be, she would rouse up, and give herself a shake of preparation whenever the sound of those special horses' feet was heard in the street. Carriages without number would pass and repass, but Bushie made no sign; at the first note of these she would be ready, make her way down, and leap into the carriage, taking her place in sublime contentment. Then, when we got out of the city, driving through this gate or that, into the country, or around the old walls, her great joy was to be put down to run with the carriage, back and forth, barking at the horses, as if to say, "Come on; how slow you are!" and then coursing along, ahead, low to the ground, like a "feckless hairy oubit," as Dr. John Brown calls one of her compatriots; the happiest of the happy. But Bush was not always permitted to go. Sometimes there was no room for her, and then she was deeply injured and unhappy. On these occasions her faculty for speech would come into play. She would go to Sallie, and lying down flat on her stomach, with her hind legs stretched out straight behind her, working her head up and down and moving her forepaws from side to side, she would utter a peculiar succession of sounds, of varied intonations, as much like speech as anything could be which was unintelligible. "What is it, Bush?" Sallie would say. "Have they gone without you, little woman? It is too bad, poor Bushie!" At these words of sympathy Bushie's tones would grow high and hysterical, and she would have to be taken up and much

petted and comforted. Sometimes in the evening she would have another complaint to make. She always had her saucer of milk with a little tea in it, and it sometimes, but rarely, happened that a pressure of guests, or other accident, caused it to be forgotten. She would try first to attract attention to herself by sitting up on her hind legs, first on the sofa, and then, if not noticed, on the arm of the sofa, solemn and grave like a little sphinx. If this manœuvre failed, she would go off to Sallie and have a long talk, upon which Sallie would come and whisper to one of us, "Did you forget Bushie's tea?" The sin of omission acknowledged, she would say with conviction, "I thought so," and go away to make good the deficiency. The movement of which I have spoken, with her forepaws, Miss Cushman called playing the piano. "Play the piano, Bushie," she would say; and Bush knew perfectly well what was meant, and would go through the performance, accompanying it with a few words of recitative, with great gravity and éclat. Endless was the pleasure and comfort this dog afforded to all genuine dog-lovers, and many were the moments she filled as nothing else can, because there is nothing in this world which so fits itself in, without jarring upon the complex and subtle movements of the human mind, as a dog can; nothing so absolutely loving, faithful, disinterested, and sympathetic as the dog nature, and especially the Skye dog nature. Bushie was a great traveller; she went with her mistress everywhere; she crossed the ocean many times; she knew so well how to travel by rail, that it scarcely ever occurred in all the long journeys, even on the Continent, and especially in France, where they have no hearts and no bowels of compassion, and are mere machines where official duty is concerned, that she was ever confiscated, or put in the black hole. She was so wise and quiet, that even the

lynx-eyed guardians of the trains never discovered her. She knew perfectly well that she was contraband, and submitted to any kind of restraint patiently. Then her joy when we arrived, and she could feel free once more, was unbounded, and so plainly manifested that no one could doubt that reason as well as sound logic had exercised her brains on the subject.

At length, after a varied and honorable career, during which she gave us the minimum of trouble and the maximum of pleasure, the fatal moment came to Bushie, as it must to all of us. She sickened and died in Rome in the spring of 1867, still in the fulness of strength and beauty, although fifteen years of age. On that night, when watching over her last moments, friends came in as usual, but there was a heavy cloud over the household. One among them, a young English poet and artist, who knew nothing of what was transpiring above stairs, wrote the next day the following note, which seems worthy of transcribing here.

"DEAR MISS CUSHMAN: I was sorry that I should have remained so long with you last evening, when I learned that you had just lost a favorite pet animal and were suffering that pain. Those misfortunes are not always the easiest to bear of which the world thinks the least, any more than those are the greatest which may appear so. The loss of any living creature to which the epithet 'most faithful' may be applied is certainly among the very real ones.

"May I be permitted, therefore, to express my sympathy with you under the loss, and beg to be accepted,

"Your faithful and obedient servant,

"W. D."

"P. S. The Latin word for 'most faithful' is *fidelissimus*; but I suppose the feminine termination would be *a*, — *fidelissima*."

Dear Bushie lies buried in the garden of No. 38, Via

Gregoriana. Over her remains stands a broken antique pillar, around the base of which cluster the acanthus, violets, and many sweet flowers. Upon the marble is engraved, "Bushie, *Comes Fidelissima.*" She was *the* dog *par excellence*, but there were others in the family. One, a Scotch terrier of the pepper-and-mustard breed, named Brier, was run over by the carriage and buried where he fell, in a lonely part of the Campagna. Another was Teddy, a toy terrier of the English breed, who afterwards became the property of a dear friend, Miss Blagden of Florence. She was a devoted dog-lover, and much might be written of her dog and cat family, which was composed of strays and waifs which her benevolence toward the canines induced her to give home and care to. One of these, the ugliest kind of a poodle, she rescued from some boys who were amusing themselves in drowning it by inches in Venice. It was without form, and void of grace or comeliness, so she bestowed upon it the classic name of "Venézia"!

Miss Isa Blagden's name must not be passed over with slight mention in this record. She was one of Miss Cushman's most faithful friends, a warm, true, and ardent soul, whom Florence and many friends will long remember. She died in 1873, and the obituary notices of her death speak of her as "one well known in the world of letters, and remarkable for the warmth of attachment she inspired in men and women of acknowledged genius, as well as for her own intellectual gifts. Miss Blagden was linked to Mr. Browning and his illustrious wife by ties of the closest friendship. She nursed the latter in her last illness, and performed the same loving office for Theodosia Trollope, to whose memory, as well as to Mrs. Browning's, grateful Florence has erected a commemorative tablet. It may be added that her charitable presence gladdened the last moments of many more obscure sufferers in the fair

city where she lived and died, and where she will be long remembered as a conspicuous and honored figure." Whenever Miss Cushman's journeys to and from England took Florence in their way, she rarely failed to pause for a time at Miss Blagden's villa, on the classic hill of Bellosguardo, where she dispensed for many years a genial and charming hospitality. When haste made this visit impossible, Miss Blagden would go any distance to meet the travellers and exchange with them a passing greeting. On one occasion, when Miss Cushman was hurrying to England to her mother's death-bed, after a night's journey, as the train rolled into the station in the early morning, there sat the faithful little woman on the platform, having risen in the small hours and come a long distance from the country to exchange a hurried farewell. Miss Cushman, as long as she herself lived, kept her memory green by ministering care of her grave in the Protestant cemetery at Florence.

Miss Blagden was on a visit to Miss Cushman in Rome, at the time of Bushie's death, and her loving sympathy inspired the following tribute:—

TO DEAR OLD BUSHIE.

FROM ONE WHO LOVED HER.

Much loving and much loved, dare I,
With my weak, faltering praise,
Record thy pure fidelity,
Thy patient, loving ways;

Thy wistful, eager, gasping sighs,
Our sullen sense to reach;
The solemn meaning of thine eyes,
More clear than uttered speech;

Thy silent sympathy with tears,
Thy joy our joys to share;
In weal and woe, through all these years,
Our treasure and our care;

Thy dumb, adoring gratitude,
Noble, yet tender too,
Respondent to each varied mood,
Not human, but more true!

They say we are not kin to thee,
Thy race unlike our own, —
O that our human friends could be
Like thee, thou faithful one!

The wondrous privilege of love,
Love perfect and entire,
Was thine, true heart; to naught above
Can human hearts aspire!

From all our lives some faith, some trust,
With thy dear life is o'er;
A life-long love lies in thy dust;
Can human grave hold more?

After Bushie, our desire for dogs was naturally somewhat quenched, and we did not seek to replace her; but the gracious gift of another Skye of good blood and antecedents at Malvern could not be rejected, and a few words must be said concerning this dear dog also. She was called "Duchess," as her mothers and grandmothers, and Dr. John Brown knows how many more generations back, had been called before her. Any one so disposed may read in that delightful book called "Horæ Subsecivæ" in England, and "Spare Hours" in America, the story of this family, under the head "Duchess." She was a worthy descendant of this illustrious line, full of ability, capacity, and *good sense*. Her docility was especially remarkable; she rapidly acquired any desired trick or accomplishment, and seemed to have real enjoyment in the performance of them. It was enough to give her the idea that you wanted her to do a special thing, and she set herself to acquire it, with what seemed like real thoughtfulness.

She could sit up, stand up, walk about on her hind legs, sit with her paws on the table, and preach, when requested to do so, with great unction; speak when spoken to, play games of hide and seek with untiring assiduity, never giving up an object until she had found it; and yet, with all these *cultivated* tastes, her behavior out of doors was always that of the most abandoned child of nature. To see her leap through long grass or ferns was a sight to behold for gracefulness and beauty. Duchess was also a good traveller; instead of concealing her as we had always done Bushie, it was found best to let her take care of herself; in the stations she seemed to know she must not identify herself with us, and we carefully avoided taking notice of her, further than keeping her in sight. She would sit off at a distance, perfectly composed and calm in the midst of the direful confusion of the station, but watching her opportunity carefully; and when we were passed, as is the custom on Continental railways, like prisoners being let out upon the platform, and hurried, first come first served, to get the best places we could, she would get through between the feet of the crowd and into the carriage in the same way, ensconcing herself under the seat, and only showing herself when we were fairly started. One of these journeys — our last journey from Rome — occurs to my remembrance. We had with us a cage, with a pair of canary-birds, members of a large family left behind, which had grown and increased year by year, and made vocal and cheerful the back entrance to the house. These little birds were mated, and afterwards in Paris completed their domestic arrangements, and the little wife was sitting on four eggs, when it came our time to cross over to England. Of course we expected that the racket of the journey would break up this domestic felicity, but it could not be helped. To our surprise,

however, the devoted little creature stuck to her duties through all the thundering noises of the stations, the vibration and rattle of the express-train, the moving and tossing of the channel steamer. The cage was well wrapped up, leaving only a small space at the top for air. When looked in upon through this opening she was always found in her nest, and the little yellow head would turn and the bright eye glance upward, as much as to say, "What does it all mean? How long this tornado lasts!" And then she would snuggle down again, saying more plainly than words by the movement, "Well, come what will, my place is here." Well, those eggs were hatched shortly after our arrival, and it was such a remarkable fact in natural history, that we hoped much we might be able to keep the little creatures which had come through such a trying experience; but they did not thrive. The damp, raw English spring affected them badly, and they dropped off one by one. The parents came to this country and lived out their little span, much loved, and much lamented; but they never succeeded in raising another family, even under the most favorable conditions.

The subject of the household creatures is not complete without some mention of Miss Cushman's horses, which she held in the same warm esteem as the rest of her dumb dependants. She was a great lover of horses, and possessed many rare animals in her time. Of these, the first and best loved was the noble English blood-horse "Ivan," a bright chestnut of incomparable breeding. He was a hunter *par excellence*, but she never used him for hunting in Rome. She preferred a good reliable Roman horse, not so handsome, but wise in his generation, who knew the Campagna thoroughly, and could be trusted to get himself and his rider safely through the varied snares

and pitfalls of that fascinating but dangerous ground. Grand Ivan would have faced any danger, and gone over any wall, even if it had a precipice on the other side of it; but Othello would know where he could go and where he could not, by the sure instinct of the Campagna horses, and would find a way round, or positively refuse to go where danger lurked. There were many dangers in this Campagna riding; but of this we will speak in another place. Ivan in Rome was put in harness, and the first time he felt the ignoble traces on his satin skin every vein stood out over his body in high relief, and the thin fine nostril became red as blood; ears, eyes, tail, every part of him, expressed his astonishment and disgust. But he was of too noble a nature to disgrace himself by insubordination; he submitted, and did his whole duty ever after in the most docile and admirable way, never losing the superb bearing and action which always characterized him. When the Roman house was broken up Ivan was sent to good friends in England, and lived a happy, honored life with them, carrying a lovely lady in the Park, and always distinguished to the last above all others by his uncommon beauty. Other horses there were, but we will only recall here the ponies, Beduin, Charley, and Alwin. The first was a Welsh pony of good stock, reared by a dear friend who brought up her horses as she would her children, and consequently created in them something almost equivalent to a soul. Beduin was a beautiful little creature, full of genial and social traits. He loved and craved human society, and liked nothing better than to be the centre of a circle of petting and admiring friends. He would tuck his head under the hand which failed to pat him; and even in harness and on the road would always incline toward whatever he was meeting, especially if a dog was of the company.

This habit obliged his driver to be always on guard against too close contact. His career was not long; the soft Italian climate did not suit his mountain temperament; the very first summer he was left in Rome he fell ill, and nothing could save him, though he had been sprinkled by the priest on the blessed day of San Antonio, to please the Italian groom, who duly decorated him with ribbons for the ceremony. After this he always went by the name of "The Blessed" among us. Let us hope that the holy rite, though it failed to preserve him here, may procure for him admission to some happy hunting-ground across the border.

He was replaced by Charley, a beautiful English pony, and Alwin, a handsome gray; and these two went through many of the Roman winters, and are still living, — the property of English friends.

Very little that is new remains to be said of the famed Campagna di Roma: all the greatest names in literature and art have celebrated it; it has been sung, described, painted, *ad infinitum*. Only in its connection with Miss Cushman's life in Rome shall I refer to it; all visitors to Rome know how potent are its influences, how large a place it fills to the mind, as it does to the senses. Riding in the Campagna is one of the most esteemed pleasures of the season, and an excellent and very needful stimulant against the enervating Italian climate. Before the Roman hunt was inaugurated, riding in large parties was the custom, and these rides were much more pleasant, though less exciting, perhaps, than the hunt, which was often a mere *meet* with a few wild scampers over a circumscribed range of country, full of hair-breadth 'scapes, and little other result. It is true there was an immense fascination about hunting in Rome, on the score of picturesqueness and varied excitement. The meets were usually held at the most

beautiful and historically interesting points that could be selected, where all the surroundings, beside gratifying the eye, supplied to the mind suggestive material of the rarest kind. It was what the Italians would call a "*combinazione*," unsurpassed in beauty and interest. All that was best and highest and prettiest and most noted in Rome flocked to this gathering, — the Roman aristocracy, not good as hunters or noted for skill in horse-flesh; the sturdy, solid, undemonstrative English, with soiled red coats speaking of real work, and noble horses unequalled for speed and endurance; our own country people, alert, ready, making mistakes, but profiting by them, not so well up in horses, but getting every bit of energy and go out of their hacks, "trying all things," holding on or letting go with equal facility, and pretty sure to be in at the death, though what is technically called "the death" was by no means a foregone conclusion.

The Roman foxes possessed advantages in their favor which made it difficult to catch them. The Campagna is, in fact, in many places a vast rolling roof covering buried buildings, and honeycombed everywhere by hidden galleries and hollows, no doubt very familiar to their vulpine habituées. It is rarely the dogs can overtake them far from their burrows, and once in them the chase is hopeless. These hollows, or *grotti*, as they are called, are very dangerous to riders, the thin crust of earth often giving way under the weight of the horse, and throwing him suddenly to the ground, sometimes breaking his legs, or inflicting worse damage. There is no warning whatever of these hidden pitfalls; the turf looks as smiling over them as elsewhere, only fate lurks below and seizes one out of a hundred by the leg which happens to touch upon the small weak point. Little reck the hunters of these dangers, however, as they go at headlong pace after

the poor little game, useless, when they have secured it, except for self-glorification.

But hunting is, after all, only a pretext; the fox is the least part of it; and we cannot condemn heartily a sport which leads to so much of health and enjoyment and manliness, which, as in these Roman hunts, brought together — into one blazing focus, as it were — so much of the interest and beauty and suggestiveness of the famous capital and its surroundings. O, those unsurpassed days, — days of glory and beauty, in which the very air seemed like golden wine burning and tingling in the veins! An atmosphere so pure and translucent it seemed to bring down heaven to earth or lift earth to heaven; a vast distance lying in serene repose under its blue shadows, contrasting the animation, the brightness, the color of the immediate foreground, — dogs, horses, people, all full of joyous excitement; pictures everywhere, charming groups, breaking and shifting and changing every minute, with ever new and ever effective combinations; finally, the grand outbreak, when, summoned by the horn of the huntsman and the deep bay of the hounds, the pageant sweeps away like scarlet leaves scattered before the wind. Meantime the carriages and the lookers-on follow along as they can, by the highway, or sometimes taking a short cut across the greensward, hoping that one of those chances which so often occur in the chase may bring the hunt back upon its traces.

Glorious as the hunt was, its attractions by no means compensated for the loss of the rides, which the greater attractions of the hunt caused to fall into disuse. The rides were explorations in a certain sense; they brought one into "strange fields and pastures new" continually, and often into very great difficulties and some dangers from venturing into the "pastures new" aforesaid. The *Cam-*

pagnoli, or shepherds and farmers of the Campagna, are very jealous of intrusion upon their fields, and often with reason. There was much inexcusable tampering with their rights and property, in the shape of broken-down fences, etc. Some adventurous equestrians even rode with a small hatchet at the saddle-bow for this purpose; and, naturally, the owners of the fences resented this bitterly, and were at times aggressive, even to the extent of using their firearms, — at least, so it was said; though no serious mischief of that kind ever occurred, to my knowledge. There was also another danger, in the shape of the savage sheep-dogs, trained to be fierce in the protection of their flocks. It was not pleasant to have a dozen or more of these creatures baying and barking, and sometimes biting the horses' heels, and direful stories were told of what they were capable of doing. These dogs and the beautiful cattle of the Campagna deserve a word of mention, they seem so appropriate to the locality. The dogs have little tents or huts made of straw, in which they live; and sometimes two or three soft, shaggy young ones sit gravely in the opening of these tents, looking forth with contemplative aspect upon the world. They are large, handsome creatures, and untiring and most intelligent in their vocation, supplementing the efforts of their masters in collecting the sheep with wonderful sagacity and zeal. When the flock is all safely huddled together in the appointed spot, the dogs station themselves like sentinels at a distance, seated at regular intervals awaiting further orders.

The grand, slow, cream-colored oxen of the Campagna, with their wide-spread, branching horns and large, soft black eyes, make another characteristic feature of the scene, enhancing its peaceful solemnity. Sometimes in the valleys, which intersect the Campagna everywhere

like great chasms which have been suddenly rent asunder by volcanic violence in the otherwise monotonous plain, herds of small active horses scamper away from before you, rushing up the slopes covered with cork-trees and ilex and clothed with asphodel and other wild foliage, stopping, when they have attained a point of vantage, to gaze with wild eyes at the intruders upon their solitude. These valleys are wonderfully beautiful and picturesque, generally carpeted with the softest verdure, broken by winding streams which have to be crossed often at the risk of the equestrian. You descend into them, like Dante and Virgil into the recesses of the Inferno; and, indeed, one of the most noted of them is called the Valley of the Inferno. Not that they are like the Inferno, or even the purgatorial regions, when you get into them. On the contrary, they are decidedly heavenly, and impart very paradisaical sensations as one scampers over the soft turf and follows their winding and constantly varied openings. The wild horses above mentioned belong to the noble families of Rome, and are raised in large numbers; each horse bears on his flank the brand of the family to which he belongs. They are clever little horses, sure-footed and enduring, but not very handsome in the eyes of a connoisseur. Miss Cushman's favorite mount for many years was a black Campagna horse, which she preferred for safety and comfort to any of her English horses. He possessed the invaluable quality of going when you wanted him to go and not going when you did not, being an honest creature who did the best that was in him; the best can do no more!

Emerging from these valleys in the same sudden way that you enter them, you find yourself again on the level — or apparently level — Campagna, and the eye ranges quite over and beyond them as if they no longer existed. Some

knowledge of the Campagna is very necessary in taking a ride of any length. You can easily get lost upon it, and wander aimlessly, at times stopped by fences or unfordable streams, and obliged to go back on your own tracks again and again. Memory recalls how on one such occasion a dinner-party awaited Miss Cushman at home, and night fell upon fruitless efforts to find the nearest way back. At length, emerging upon the high-road, it was found that many long miles lay between the party and its destination, and they arrived at last, weary and worn, to find the guests assembled full of consternation at their absence; but the dinner, albeit a little spoiled, was not the less merry over the misadventure.

Around the old walls was also a favorite ride, always cool in the heavy shadows of the massive battlemented towers, full of interest and variety on the one side, if not on the other, though the walls themselves are beautiful also to antiquarian eyes as well as to the lover of nature, from the many new and peculiar growths which cluster upon them. It was possible to go all round the city in this circuit, or to enter again at any one of the numerous gates which open at intervals through the solid masonry. Nothing could be more varied, more peculiar, more quaint and wonderful, than the scenes traversed in these rides and drives. Often we paused to descend from the carriage and explore some picturesque ruin, or gather wild-flowers under the arches of the massive aqueducts, which come striding into Rome from all points, like giants, but beneficent ones; some ruined, but towering grand and massive in their decay, wreathed and decorated with climbing foliage, and framing within their graceful arches wondrous pictures, or bearing on their shoulders the bright and abounding water for which Rome is famous.

Toward the spring, which often commences as early as

the middle of February, the environs of Rome burst out into a succession of floral enchantments, unique and unparalleled; the roadside banks are purple with violets, which cluster in perfumed groups in all the bosky dells and emerald slopes of the numerous lovely villas in the neighborhood of Rome. Violet-gathering — by hundreds, by thousands, by the bushel — is the feature of the hour. The very air is full of them; and later on comes the wonderful *festa* of the anemones, — not like the flaming red flowers with the black hearts which light the way along the Riviére, although some of these are also found among them, — but a delicate, single cup, of endless shades of soft color, from the purest white through all the tints of lilac, mauve, and pink; some deep, some hardly touched with color, no two alike. They spring up all over the grass, and never seem to lessen while the season lasts, for all the gathering. Special expeditions to gather these sweet children of the spring were among our annual pleasures. All thought the anemones enjoyed it too; for they bloomed and opened and closed night and morning in water quite as well as they did upon their native heath. Some took them up root and all and made mosaic tables of them; a barbarous practice, which must end in depriving the fields of one of their greatest attractions.

Besides the anemones and violets were no end of other charming growths, whose advent each spring was hailed with never-failing enthusiasm. Flowers, both wild and cultivated, are abundant and cheap in Rome. Every one will remember the roses, the cyclamen, the famous ranunculi, like roses in variety and beauty, but without their perfume. The short Roman spring is a season unsurpassed in any country in the world; but it is a fleeting beauty, which must be caught flying, as it were; for, after a few short days of virginal perfection, it rushes into the full flush and passionate luxuriance of summer.

Miss Cushman never wearied of these simple pleasures, and each one, as the season came round, was welcomed by her with ever new delight. The spring, too, inaugurated a succession of excursions to the many points of interest about Rome; to Albano, to Tivoli, to some new excavation or recently discovered treasure. Thus she saw the last and finest portrait statue of the Vatican, — that of Augustus Cæsar, carrying on into maturer life the fine lineaments so well known in the head of the young Augustus, just as it was taken from the earth, still "stained with the variation of each soil," broken and prostrate, but full of nobleness, artistic and imperial. She saw, too, the great bronze statue of the young Hercules as it was lifted from its bed of oyster-shells, with remnants of the gilding which had once covered it still clinging here and there, and peered curiously into the opening in the top of the head, through which it was supposed the priests had uttered their pretended oracles.

Ever new and constantly recurring surprises of this kind belong to Rome alone, where the long-buried past rises up to confront the present, and, ghostlike, "in their habit as they lived," the actors in a remote antiquity stalk again across the stage. Other civilizations we know lie buried; we know that the earth teems with them; but they lie in barren desolation, save where individual effort and enthusiasm brings them with difficulty to the light of day; but in Rome the foot unearths them, the common way is strewn with them, the earth is hollow with their crumbling remains, the river rolls its yellow tide over them, and the very air is full of their suggestions. In Rome alone the old and the new exist together and can never be disunited.

Following upon the foregoing description of Miss Cushman's home surroundings in Rome, I may refer to a letter

lately received from Miss Elizabeth Peabody of Boston, in which I find some early remembrances and later references to her life in Rome, which are interesting and valuable. Speaking of the first time she saw her act Queen Katharine, she says:—

"I need not say how I enjoyed her splendid impersonation throughout, but specially the death scene. It was perfectly wonderful how she blended the infirmities of dying with the majesty of her spirit. But especially I was struck anew with the miraculous genius of Shakespeare as evinced in that last speech to Cromwell, in which Queen Katharine characterized Wolsey, in those sharp, heavily thought-freighted sentences, which it was obvious must be just so concise and terse, because the fast-coming death so overcame her power to utter that it was only by the intense will she could utter at all, and so was forced to concentrate in the few words of each sentence. Then in the very death she did not seem to struggle much, did not evince physical pain, only torpor of organs. She went out of the body almost visibly, while the song of angels was sung behind the scenes.

"When she returned again in 1860 she gave me a season ticket, and I went down from Concord to Boston, and saw her through the whole, constantly surprised to new admiration by each impersonation. I do not know but I thought Rosalind the most marvellous of all. Her wit and grace and make-up making her seem but twenty-eight; and changing my former idea of a petite Rosalind into the new one of so fine and large a figure, which of course I saw Rosalind must have been, to match the force of character that conceived her bold enterprise.

"Another seven years passed before I saw her in Rome, and experienced the generous friendship and hospitality which made those five months so rich in opportunities of enjoyment. But even amid the glories of Rome there was nothing that I studied with more interest and intensity than herself. Such

simplicity and directness and humility of heart was to me most touching and wonderful in a person of such magnificent executive powers. You remember the conversations at those delightful breakfasts, to which she invited me every morning? Never was my own mind in such an intense state of activity. It seems to me that I came to my mental majority that year, and all my own life and the world's life, as history had taught it to me, was explained. Principles seemed to rise up over the rich scenery of human life, like the white peaks of the Alps over the Swiss valleys, which were to me the most exciting and transporting objects in nature, — transporting surely, for they carry one beyond the limits of the finite. Do you recollect how I used to come and announce my discoveries in the world of morals and spiritual life, whose gates seemed to be opened to me by the historical monuments, as well as the masterpieces of art? What golden hours those were when such grand receptive hearts and imaginations bettered one's thoughts in the reply! And were not some of those evenings symposia of the gods? Do you remember one when she read 'The Halt before Rome' to Lord Houghton, Lothrop, Motley, Bayard Taylor, yourself, and me? Can you, or anybody with mortal pen, describe so that readers could realize the high-toned, artistic, grandly moral, delightfully human nature, that seemed to be the palpable atmosphere of her spirit, quickening all who surrendered themselves to her influence? What sincerity, what appreciation of truth and welcome of it (even if it wounded her); what bounteousness of nature; and how the breath of her mouth winnowed the chaff from the wheat in her expression of observed character and judgment of conduct! Those she loved she watched over that no shadow of falsehood or of infirmity should be allowed to touch their whiteness. She truly 'respected what was dear' to her, and her respect was a safeguard and rescuer from moral perils. One of the last times I saw her I remember her earnest affectionate appeal to a young friend to forget herself and her appearance to others, in the noble unconsciousness that springs

unbidden from surrendering one's self to some generous idea, and the sweet impulse of making others happy and appreciated. It must have waked an echo that will forever repeat itself, for I think it may have been the last time the young girl ever saw her.

"Have you recorded that conversation of hers with Mr. Peabody when she returned from America, and asked him to withdraw $25,000 from American securities in 1860; and he said 'O no, he could not in conscience as her banker do it, for of course the business men of the world were not going to let this war go on,' and gold was then at 128; and she replied, 'Mr. Peabody, I saw that first Maine regiment that answered to Lincoln's call march down State Street in Boston with their chins in the air, singing "John Brown's soul is marching on," and, believe me, this war will not end till slavery is abolished, whether it be in five years or thirty; and gold will be up to 225 before it is over'?

"With all her respect and regard for Mr. Seward, who said the war would not last sixty days, she trusted her own intuition, which certainly in this case was proved to be unerring.

"Ah! what a loss she is to me, who in comparison with you and her family only touched the outside of her circle at an occasional tangent! By her timely gift to the Boston training-school for Kindergartners she sustained the cause through an early peril of perishing by inanition, for my sake. She afterwards offered to be guaranty nearly to the sum of another $1,000 to any publisher who would publish my lectures on the moral meanings of history; that is, what it taught the world before the advent of Christ, of which I gave her the outline; and I meant to have prepared them for the press by rewriting them carefully. I never knew a person so ready, and even ardent, to help and further the efforts and works of others! There was swimming-room for all the world in her heart! She was one of the prophets of the unity of the human race, — a proof of it, indeed!

"I enclose you a letter; the only one in which she speaks

of herself at any length, for generally her letters were only full of her correspondent's interests or affairs. You must keep it in a golden box, for I value it above all things else she ever gave me."

From the letter above alluded to I make the following extract: —

"Your letter has done me good, dear friend, and not the least part of it that which speaks approvingly of my beloved art, and all that it takes to make an exponent of it. It has been my fate to find in some of my most intimate relations my art 'tabooed,' and held in light esteem. This has always hurt me; but my love for my friends has ever been stronger than my pride in anything else, and so my art has been 'snubbed.' But no one knows better than myself, after all my association with artists of sculpture or painting, how truly *my* art comprehends all the others and surpasses them, in so far as the study of mind is more than matter! Victor Hugo makes one of his heroines, an actress, say, 'My art endows me with a searching eye, a knowledge of the soul and the soul's workings, and, spite of all your skill, I read you to the depths!' This is a truth more or less powerful as one is more or less truly gifted by the good God."

CHAPTER VII.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

"The eagle suffers little birds to sing,
And is not careful what they mean thereby."
Titus Andronicus.

"Love all, trust a few, do wrong to none."
All's Well That Ends Well.

THERE has been much in these later times written and said, — much even preached regarding the drama. Mighty changes have been silently at work in the mimic scene as elsewhere. The ban, which for so many ages has been laid upon the profession, mingling together in one common outlawry the good, the bad, the gifted, and the dull alike, which has been an insurmountable barrier to those within and to many without the pale, has been — or rather is in a fair way of being — lifted. That domain, that arena, upon which not only the mimic pictures of our lives are represented, but where life itself can best exhibit "its form and pressure," is beginning to appear in its true meaning to the minds of men: the thoughtful ones among them no longer look upon it as a mere amusement, the occupation of an idle hour; they begin to speculate upon it, to look curiously into it, to revolt at the injustice with which it has been condemned, to see with "larger, other eyes" into its vast capabilities and possibilities for good, and to take the initiatory steps

toward breaking down the middle wall of partition which fences off from us one of our truest and most God-given forces for touching the hearts and awakening the consciences of men.

The time is still within the memory of many of us when to church-people and professors of religion the very name of the theatre was Anathema; when for a clergyman to be seen at a theatre was considered a grave offence against his sacred office; now, "the Pulpit and the Stage" are associated together in eloquent discourses. One of Boston's most saintly men honorably united Miss Cushman's name after her death with that of Dr. Horace Bushnell, drawing a parallel between their respective careers equally honorable to the actress and to the divine. Now, young people who aspire to the profession say, with truth, when argument is excited against their choice, "I can be a gentleman (or a lady) as well on the stage as anywhere else; it depends upon myself: and as to temptation, that lies in wait for me at any corner of the city as well as behind the scenes."

There, as everywhere, good and evil mingle, but evil is not more indigenous to the soil than good; rather less so, if we take into consideration how much evil is fostered and encouraged for base uses by those into whose hands the influences of the theatre for good or evil fall. It is the custom to dwell much upon the temptations of an actor's or an actress's life. It may be doubted if these are much greater there than elsewhere. It may be doubted if the average of yielding is greater there than elsewhere. Miss Cushman often said that her experience "behind the scenes" had shown her a decided average in favor of goodness, purity, and honesty of life; instances which would do honor to any station of unpretending conscientious self-sacrifice and devotion,—worthy mothers, excellent wives,

faithful friends. There can be no more thrilling representations of heroic deeds before the curtain than are often going on in undemonstrative silence and patient endurance behind it. There is no class more kind to one another, none more generous; their faults all lean to virtue's side; and when we reckon up their sins of omission and commission, a candid and unbiased judgment will admit that in the eternal equilibrium of forces their worser qualities will surely "kick the beam."

"Behind the scenes" is such a *terra incognita* to the world at large, that few are able to judge righteous judgment from the standpoint of personal experience. To those who have this experience it ought to be a duty as well as a pleasure to speak a word in season for a much misunderstood and ill-judged class, who have inherited the prejudices of ages, and yet have been able to show so many shining examples of genius and goodness to the admiration of the world.

It was one of Miss Cushman's crowning glories, that she knew how to reconcile the inconsistencies and harmonize the discordances of this peculiar realm, where she reigned with the same undoubted sovereignty as everywhere else. Her mere presence on the boards seemed to give life and value to what was too often a mere collection of incongruous materials. Her earnestness, her thoroughness, seemed to be at once infused into the mass of inertia, ignorance, and indifference; all had to do their best, because she always did her best; and her best was not, as in so many instances, a mere *ego*, stalking around, wrapped in its own sublime self-confidence, looking down upon and ignoring the lesser lights as of no consequence. Her artistic ideal was of a different sort; she knew and felt the absolute truth of the old, time-honored law, that "God hath set the members every one of them in the

body, as it hath pleased him. . . . . That there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another. . . . . And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." And she could not see anything working wrongly or ignorantly, without doing her very best to right it. Her rehearsals were always hard-working lessons to all about her; and that in no unkind or harsh spirit, but with all the kindly helpfulness of her nature, suggesting, encouraging, showing how a thing ought to be done, and, when she saw the true spirit of endeavor and improvement, giving it a cheering word which was invaluable.

This peculiar gift of hers gave occasion for a very pleasant demonstration after one of her last engagements at Mr. McVicker's Chicago Theatre, which may be fittingly mentioned here. After her last performance, as she was preparing to leave the theatre, a message came to her, that the manager would be glad to see her for a few moments in the green-room. There had been no whisper of what was intended; it was totally unexpected to her, when, on entering the green-room, she found the entire company assembled, expectation in all their faces. The friendly and genial manager made a pleasant little speech, and then proceeded to read the following letter: —

"McVicker's Theatre, Chicago, January 10, 1873.

"Miss Charlotte Cushman: As members of a profession to which you, not only as an artist, but as a lady and true woman, have contributed the earnest zeal and heartfelt labors of a lifetime to ennoble and honor, we, members of Mr. McVicker's Theatre, desiring to express to you our appreciation, present, through our worthy manager, this circlet of gold, inscribed with the motto that has so endeared you to us, and which is no less engraven on our hearts, namely,

'kind words.' May your happiness here and in the great hereafter be only symboled by this golden circlet, 'endless.'"

Signed by all the members of the company.

The ring was a plain circlet of black enamel, having upon it in gold letters the simple legend, "Kind words. McVicker's Theatre, January 11, 1873," — a plain memento, but one which expressed a priceless value. Miss Cushman made a hearty, pleasant speech of thanks, and retired beaming. She was greatly pleased and touched; no tribute that was ever paid her gratified her more.

Behind the scenes, as before them, Miss Cushman was always thoroughly herself, energetic, capable, equal to any emergency, competent to any necessity; what was right she would have, and she knew how to bend the most stubborn materials to her behests; and yet this was never done in a domineering or captious spirit, but by the sheer force of "character," that most supreme of gifts.

Under this head it may not be inappropriate to recall some remembrances of the part which more than any other is identified with her name, and may be said to have been her own special creation, that of Meg Merrilies. I have sought in vain among the newspaper files of the period for the absolute date of her first performance of this character; but other evidence settles it as having been in the year 1840–41, during Braham's first and only engagement in New York, and at the Park Theatre. Her own account of it was substantially as follows. But first it may be mentioned that there is one very ancient newspaper-cutting, which is, however, without name or date, in which the fact of her assumption of the part at a moment's notice is thus alluded to: —

"Many years ago Miss Charlotte Cushman was doing at the Park Theatre what in stage parlance is called 'general utility

business,' — that is, the work of three ordinary performers, filling the gap when any one was sick, playing this one's part and the other's on occasion, never refusing to do whatever was allotted to her. As may be supposed, one who held this position had as yet no position to be proud of. One night 'Guy Mannering,' a musical piece, was announced. It was produced by Mr. Braham, the great English tenor, who played Harry Bertram. Mrs. Chippendale was cast for Meg Merrilies, but during the day was taken ill; so this obscure utility actress, this Miss Cushman, was sent for and told to be ready in the part by night. She might read it on the boards if she could not commit it. But the 'utility woman' was not used to reading her parts; she learned it before nightfall, and played it after nightfall. She played it so as to be enthusiastically applauded. At this half-day's notice the part was taken up which is now so famous among dramatic portraitures."

It *was* in consequence of Mrs. Chippendale's illness that she was called upon on the very day of the performance to assume the part. Study, dress, etc., had to be an inspiration of the moment. She had never especially noticed the part; as it had been heretofore performed there was not probably much to attract her; but, as she stood at the side-scene, book in hand, awaiting her moment of entrance, her ear caught the dialogue going on upon the stage between two of the gypsies, in which one says to the other, alluding to her, "Meg, — why, she is no longer what she was; she doats," etc., evidently giving the impression that she is no longer to be feared or respected; that she is no longer in her right mind. With the words a vivid flash of insight struck upon her brain: she saw and felt by the powerful dramatic instinct with which she was endowed the whole meaning and intention of the character; and no doubt from that moment it became what it never ceased to be, a powerful, original, and con-

sistent conception in her mind. She gave herself with her usual concentrated energy of purpose to this conception, and flashed at once upon the stage in the startling, weird, and terrible manner which we all so well remember. On this occasion it so astonished and confounded Mr. Braham, little accustomed heretofore to such manifestations, that he went to her after the play to express his surprise and his admiration.

"I had not thought that I had done anything remarkable," she says, "and when the knock came at my dressing-room door, and I heard Braham's voice, my first thought was, 'Now, what have I done? He is surely displeased with me about something'; for in those days I was only the 'utility actress,' and had no prestige of position to carry me through. Imagine my gratification when Mr. Braham said, 'Miss Cushman, I have come to thank you for the most veritable sensation I have experienced for a long time. I give you my word, when I turned and saw you in that first scene I felt a cold chill run all over me. Where have you learned to do anything like that?'"

From this time the part of Meg grew and strengthened, retaining always its perfect unity and consistency, until it became what it was, an absolute jewel of dramatic art, — a standing comment and contradiction of the oft-repeated assertion that the public must and will have variety. The public must and will have excellence; and when it gets it, cannot have it too often repeated. The true heart of humanity responds always to truth; and recognizes the absolute ideal, which is only the real in its highest manifestation, and thrills as one string when the master-hand touches it. If theatrical managers and theatrical people could only once recognize this and act upon it, what might not the theatre become? A book might well be

written on this subject, taking the part of Meg as its text and its illustration.

Meg, behind the scenes, was quite as remarkable as before them. It was a study for an artist, and has been so to many, to witness the process of preparation for this notable character, — the *make-up*, as they call it in the parlance of the theatre, — a regular, systematic, and thoroughly artistic performance, wrought out with the same instinctive knowledge which was so manifest in all she did. "Miss Cushman," a distinguished lady artist once said to her, as she wonderingly watched the process whereby the weird hag grew out of the pleasant and genial lineaments of the actress, "how do you know where to put in those shadows and make those lines which so accurately give the effect of age?" "I don't *know*," was the answer; "I only *feel* where they ought to come." And in fact the process was like the painting of a face by an old Dutch master, full of delicate and subtle manipulations, and yet so adapted to the necessities of space and light that its effect was only enhanced, not weakened, when subjected to them.

Everybody will remember this vision of age, glowing with purpose, instinct with fidelity, inspired with devotion even unto death, — strong yet weak, full of the contrasts of matter and spirit, subordinated even in all its material manifestations to the master conception. "It is terrible," says one; "it tears one all to pieces." "It is lovely," says another; "it melts my heart." "She is a witch," says a third, "from the crown of her head to the tips of her toes." Look at that attitude! the very limbs express and typify a life of privation, of hardship, of suffering. Hear that laugh! it thrills one with the supernatural emphasis of a spirit more than a human creature. Then, again, listen to the soft, tender, loving tones of the

voice, as with the tremulousness of age it croons over the boy the songs of his infancy, or changes to ringing notes of ecstatic joy as she sees awakening in his mind the dim remembrances she is seeking to evoke.

The costume of Meg is another subject upon which much of interest might be written; how it gradually grew, as all artistic things must, from the strangest materials; a bit picked up here, another there, — seemingly a mass of incoherent rags and tatters, but full of method and meaning; every scrap of it put together with reference to antecedent experiences, — the wind, the storm, the outdoor life of hardship, the tossing and tempering it had received through its long wanderings; and which to an artist's eye is beyond price, seemingly a bundle of rags, and yet a royal garment, for the truly queenly character of the old gypsy ennobled every thread of it. How many of those who felt this quality in the wearer noticed how the battered head-dress was arranged in vague and shadowy semblance to a crown, the gnarled and twisted branch she carried suggesting the emblem of command?

Much and great has been the wonder of those who saw the dress off her person, how she ever contrived to get into it; no earthly creature, but herself and Sallie, knew the mysterious exits and entrances of that extraordinary garment, the full completion of which seemed like a nightly miracle, so homogeneous did she and it become when brought in contact; so completely, as she got it on, did she enter into the personality of Meg and leave her own behind. She was always particular and perfect in her make-up, and would have been for an audience of a dozen as for one of thousands. At times, with so much wear and tear, some part of the costume would require renewal; the stockings, for example, would wear

out, and then no end of trouble would come in preparing another pair, that the exact tint of age and dirt should be attained. This she achieved with her own hand, by immersing them in a peculiar dye which she had prepared from different ingredients not generally known to the regular dyers. During all the early period of the performance of this part, when it was used more as an operetta than a drama, it was the custom for the *dramatis personæ* to sing a finale after the death of Meg. This interval gave Miss Cushman opportunity to wash the paint from her face and remove the head-dress and gray hair of Meg, so that when she was recalled — as she always was — she came before the audience her own sweet, smiling, pleasant self. The contrast between the wild, weird, intense face of Meg and the genial aspect of the actress was a veritable sensation, which it was a pity to lose when afterward the musical finale was omitted, and the piece concluded with the death of Meg.

Always, wherever Meg was represented, there sprang up among the "hero-worshippers," a strong desire to possess some memento of the part and the actress. The stick which she carried was always greatly in demand; and as it was one of the "properties," and always newly provided for each engagement, there must be many of these relics scattered about the country. Of those which she used on the several occasions of farewell, it may be mentioned that the one she carried in Philadelphia became the property of Mr. Joseph Lee of that city, who writes thus pleasantly about it:—

"My dear Miss Cushman: Might a friend who equally admires and loves you ask a very great favor? I am 'crazy to acquire' the stick which you will use next Saturday afternoon as Meg, to put it in my library as a precious souvenir of yourself and your great personation.

"I will be on hand to receive it *from you*, if you will have the goodness to present it to me. I asked this of you two years ago, but it probably escaped your memory at the time."

The Boston one was given to her friend Mr. Addison Child, and the one she carried during her last engagement in New York is at Villa Cushman, with the other sacred relics of the character; another one is preserved in St. Louis, the special property of the children. Apropos of the sticks: on one occasion, while acting in one of the New England towns, Miss Cushman received a note from a citizen of the place, telling her that he was the possessor of a stick which she had carried many years before, which he highly prized, and asking of her the great favor that she would allow him to bring it to the theatre, that it might be used again. She was always simply pleased with these little incidents, and rendered an added grace to the favor by the pleasant manner in which she responded to the request. While upon the subject of relics, I may insert here a note written to the family after Miss Cushman's death by Mr. Gibson Peacock of Philadelphia.

"I do not want to write a long letter at this time, but I must tell you of an incident that has affected me much and given me a better opinion of human nature. Mr. Pugh came to see me yesterday, and, with a good deal of feeling, asked me to accept from him as a gift the reading-desk and chair he had had made for your aunt, and which she had used at all her readings in Philadelphia. He thought, as I had introduced him to her, I was the proper person to own them, especially as he never intended that any one else should use them. They are in this house now, and the most sacred of its inanimate contents. I told him that I accepted them, and that after my wife and I are gone they are to go to your family, and this I want you and your children to bear in mind."

Another character, not so renowned as Meg Merrilies, but of somewhat the same type and class, may be remembered by many. It was a part which Miss Cushman had often assumed in her early days at the Park Theatre, when she had no choice; and the remembrance of the powerful effect she had produced in it was a tradition which lingered in the memory of managers, and caused them ever and anon, as their business interests prompted, to bring great pressure to bear upon her for a reproduction of it. She was too true an artist to be much influenced by the opinions of others concerning her art; and the idea that any impersonation which she could feel strongly herself and through which she could influence the feelings of others, could possibly lower her dignity or her position as an artist, she could not accept for a moment. As well say that a great writer lowers himself by producing such types of character.

It was sufficient for her that she found in the part of Nancy Sykes a great opportunity, to which she was fully equal; and it was characteristic of her, that she shrank from nothing in it, and was able to descend into the depths of its abasement as thoroughly and potently as she ascended to the highest range, and touched the noblest notes of the varied symphony of human nature.

There is a nobility latent in these struggling souls, which Dickens knew how to recognize and Miss Cushman to feel and interpret. In poverty, in degradation, in despair, in the bare plain dress of the people, with no accessories of beauty or refinement to blunt the keen edge of the naked truth, she presented a picture worthy to live, worthy to be commemorated here, for it shone with the pure light of Divine truth, piercing through all the gloom and darkness which surrounded it. The never-dying story of inherent virtue, nobleness, and heroism

springing up from the foulest soil, the old, old story of good rising triumphant out of evil, and faithful even unto death, even unto martyrdom.

One cannot quite recognize why the repulsive details of such a picture should be so readily accepted when clothed in all the elaboration of an author's imagination, and yet be found so shocking when acted out before the eyes; yet this distinction has always been more or less carefully drawn. It would seem to depend much upon the manner in which it is done; excellence confounds all cavilling. Miss Cushman's representation of this character was its own best excuse for being. It was, like Hamlet, Romeo, Cardinal Wolsey, unique in the strong ability which made it possible, — one of the laurel-leaves of the crown, and not unworthy to be one of that glorious company.

The following letter, as showing Miss Cushman's prompt and courageous manner of dealing with any subject which seemed to call, as she herself says, for some one to throw themselves into the breach, explains itself. Although this was an abuse to which she had long ministered in the sacred cause of charity, when the proper moment came for a word in season, it was uttered freely and fearlessly.

"The dramatic critic" of a newspaper in a neighboring city recently wrote to Miss Cushman, asking her, without much ceremony, to give a gratuitous representation for the benefit of the poor of that place, and requesting her to answer by telegraph "yes" or "no." To this summons Miss Cushman sent the following sensible and appropriate reply: —

"Dear Sir: I am in receipt of yours of the 1st, in answer to which I find myself under the necessity of saying 'no' to your request that I would give one of the nights of my short

engagement in Washington for the benefit of your local charities. My reasons for this decision are as follows: —

"I think the time has come in which some one should make a protest against the system now so fully inaugurated of making artists pay so much more than the rest of the community for charities in which they are not especially interested, and which have no claim upon them. You simply ask of me that I should give from four hundred to five hundred dollars to your poor, while those more immediately concerned, those who are bound by all the ties of neighborhood and common brotherhood, think they are doing their part in paying their quota of a dollar or two, when they receive in return a full equivalent out of the labor, severe enough, of the often hard-pressed and struggling artist. Each one of these already does to the best of his or her ability, within the range of the claims which fall upon every human creature alike. You may think it indelicate, but it is surely not irrelevant, for me to say here, that I give every year to my poor and needy, and to my poor's poor and needy, upward of $2,000, which I consider a very fair percentage upon my income. As for myself, it would take every day of every year if I were to respond to one half the applications of this kind that meet me at every turn; and each one of us who are so freely called upon in these ways I have no doubt have not only their regular clientèle of claimants, to whom they are bound and for whom they are accountable, but also hosts of such applications and claims for which they are in no way bound.

"It strikes me that the whole affair is one-sided, and that a word is necessary in the way of justice. I am willing to place myself in this breach, and say for all my confrères in art, whose errors have never been on the side of niggardliness, that it is unfair we should do all the work and pay also, both publicly and privately, as we do to my certain knowledge.

"Allow me to suggest that, in place of this easy manner of doing good, a house-to-house visitation for charitable objects would place it in the power of every citizen to help the poor

of his own city and neighborhood with much greater comfort to his conscience than this cent-per-cent contract of so much money for so much amusement, and the poor thrown in.

"Believe me to be, with much consideration,

"Respectfully yours,

"CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN."

The following letter is inserted, as not only suggestively valuable in itself, but as an explanation due to her memory. It was written at her request, and is headed, "Autograph Hunting."

"For the Public Ledger, Philadelphia.

"MR. EDITOR: Just before she left New York, Miss Cushman made an arrangement with the treasurer of the 'Sheltering Arms' to supply her autograph for the benefit of that institution, thinking naturally enough that those persons who wanted her name would not be unwilling to pay a trifling sum for this gratification, at the same time doing good to a struggling and very deserving charity.

"This simple, and as it would appear not unworthy, action on her part seems to have given occasion of offence to certain newspapers, and some very ill-natured comments upon it have appeared, attributing to her base and mean motives, and otherwise casting slurs upon an act of the purest benevolence. You will confer a favor if you will find space in your columns for this notice, thus giving publicity regarding what has grown into a very great abuse, namely, 'autograph hunting.' Miss Cushman has been for years pursued by it to such an extent that, at length, in self-defence, she has devised the above plan, which she heartily recommends to her professional brethren, artists, and other eminent persons, who must all have suffered with her the same annoyance.

"It may be said that simply writing one's name cannot demand very great exertion, and it is a little thing to do to give pleasure, etc.; but when it amounts to, on an average,

about forty or fifty demands of the kind per week, and often more when she is acting or reading in any of the large cities, — it being a thing that no one can do for her, — it is no small tax; and she felt at last that she had done as much of it as she was called upon to do, especially as the perpetual repetition of it could not but deprive even her honored name of all value. For the benefit of such persons as might choose to follow her example in this, I am requested to furnish the following particulars: —

"The society of the 'Sheltering Arms' is authorized to dispose of her autograph for the sum of twenty-five cents, which sum goes to the benefit of that institution. Upon receipt of a request for an autograph, enclosing the money, it is sent, and there an end. No, not there an end; the end no one knows; but the promise that even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones shall meet with an exceeding great return, ought to make an autograph so obtained doubly and trebly valuable.

"JUSTICE."

CHAPTER VIII.

"To that dauntless temper of his mind
He has a wisdom that doth guide his valor."
Measure for Measure.

ON the 4th of April of the year 1859 came the first tidings of her sister's illness; the news alternating for better or worse until the 24th, when a telegram summoned her to England. After a hurried journey to Paris, unfavorable accounts met her, and she hastened to Liverpool to watch over and meet the sadness of these last days. Mrs. Muspratt died on the 10th of May.

This was a heavy blow to her, whose family affections were so intense and clinging; she suffered much from it, and it was thought well to seek change and distraction in constant movement. On this occasion she explored Wales, and visited all the finest points of that picturesque and lovely country, travelling by carriage, and moving or resting as inclination prompted. Thus, slowly but surely, healing and consolation came through the blessed influences of nature. She was never inclined to hold despondency to her heart; she suffered keenly and acutely, but her nature opened simply and naturally, like a flower, to the free air and sunshine. She could not but take a living interest in life, in nature, in people; she met and sought always occasion to help others, and in this giving out of herself she reaped always a larger harvest than she had sown. The summer passed calmly and

sweetly away. After Wales came a visit to old and dear friends at Brighton, and renewed intercourse with the much-loved London circle, where she again saw Mrs. Carlyle, and they cemented a warm friendship. All this helped to complete her cure, as far as such wounds ever can be cured. On September 11 she left again for Rome, travelling by way of Paris, Aix, Cologne and Bonn, and arriving October 16.

The winter of 1859 – 60 passed as usual, but with less of social excitement. Among the "Roman Pilgrims" this year were the Brownings and Theodore Parker; the latter, too much of an invalid to enter into general society, was ministered to by Miss Cushman in her wonted kindly manner. There are some characteristic little notes of his among her papers, one or two of which I may give, as showing *how* she tried to make the Pilgrims forget for a time they were strangers in a strange land.

"My dear Miss Cushman: Many thanks for all your favors, — the drive the other day, the old-fashioned chicken-pie this day. Alas! I have no coach, no oven; but as you have often taken a kindly interest in me, I think you may like to read some of my latest publications, so I send a couple of little things which came by mail, and are the only copies in Europe.

"Believe me faithfully yours,

"Theodore Parker.

"P. S. I have finished 'Plutarch.'"

Another note says: —

"I thank you heartily for the great loaf of Indian-corn bread. It is like the song of Zion sung in a strange land and among the willows. It carries me back to dear old Boston once more. We shall eat this our bread with thankfulness of heart, not forgetting the human giver.

"Yours for the bread, "T. P.

"P. S. I suppose I am as well *as could be expected.*"

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN

From the Bust by Emma Stebbins Rome. 1860.

Miss Cushman sat to me in the course of this winter for her bust, at the request of her early friend, Mr. R. D. Shepherd, the same who is mentioned in her memoranda as having given her two years of good musical training, and thus laid the foundation, as she believed, of all her after success. During her last visit to New Orleans in 1858 Mr. Shepherd sought her out. It was pleasant for both to meet under such changed conditions; the one to find the fruition of his good deed, the other to feel the satisfaction of her nobly won position and prospects. Mr. Shepherd on that occasion asked her to have her bust modelled for him, and left the choice of an artist to herself. She determined that I should do it, and a good portion of the winter was devoted to this work, which, thanks to her good-will and sympathetic encouragement, became a successful one. The original, after the death of Mr. Shepherd, was presented by his daughter, Mrs. Gorham Brooks, to the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston. Several copies were made: one is in the possession of Mr. H. G. Stebbins of New York; another belongs to Mr. F. Sully Darley of Philadelphia; and a third to Mr. James Muspratt of Seaforth Hall, Liverpool.

On June 9 of this year Miss Cushman again sailed for New York, in the steamship Persia, passing the summer among her friends, and devoting the winter to her profession. On March 21st she acted for the benefit of the Dramatic Fund at the Academy of Music. The play was "Macbeth," with Mr. Edwin Booth as Macbeth. This was a very successful performance, the receipts amounting to $3,100, being $1,000 in excess of the amount received from any previous benefits.

On the 24th of March Miss Cushman went to St. Louis to attend the marriage of her nephew and adopted son,

Mr. Edwin C. Cushman, to Miss Crow, daughter of Wayman Crow, of St. Louis. From April 8th she acted a round of engagements in all the chief cities, and on July 1st paid a visit to Mr. Seward in Washington, on which occasion she visited with him the entrenchments on Arlington Heights, and the various camps then in process of formation about the city. Her thoughts and feelings on the subject of the civil strife which was then beginning to convulse the country will be found in her letters of this period. It pained her deeply that circumstances forced her to absent herself from home at a time so full of deep and absorbing interest. But good influences and ardent souls were as much, if not more, needed on the other side than here at that time, and she fulfilled her mission in that respect as thoroughly and well as in any other. During those grievous years, when the fate of the country seemed to be hanging in such an uneven balance, who can tell how much her courage, her hope, and her bright and persistent cheerfulness may not have aided in restoring its equilibrium? They called her the sunbeam in Rome in those days of gloom and despondency; and many afterwards confessed to having walked the streets in the hope of encountering her and getting a passing word of comfort and cheer. Few could understand or feel what those depths were in which the expatriated ones lived during those days of anxious suspense and doubt. It almost seemed as if they suffered more than those who bore the burden and heat of the day. *They* had at least the excitement of effort to sustain them; but these were called upon to face gloomy forebodings, uncertain tidings, exaggerated reports, and popular prejudices so strong that even good tidings could scarce make their way against them, and always came, so long as the result was at all doubtful, in a garbled and adulterated shape. To hope was difficult,

to administer hope to others more difficult still; but this was precisely her forte and her mission in life, and she fulfilled it to these deep needs in her own beneficent way, not only in Rome, but in England, never failing to lighten the darkest hours and the heaviest despondency with some gleams of the brightness she found in her own sanguine nature.

On the 17th of July, 1861, she returned to England. The following letter of August 8 expresses her feeling on the all-absorbing topic of the time:—

"The news brought by the last steamer has made me so sad and so heartsick, that I hardly know how to talk or write about it, further than this, that I believe in God's goodness, and that even this must work together for good. The recruiting will go on better. The civilian officers will have got a little whipping, and the South a flush in this success which will make them a little less careful next time. Meanwhile, England and France are not going to do anything about the blockade, and are getting so much cotton from other quarters which they did not expect, that in less than two years they will do without American cotton; and thus slavery and cotton will be dethroned in that hemisphere. This I learn from a very large cotton interest here, who are *pro-slavery*. Again, so much rain has fallen, that even now they are prognosticating *short crops*. Depend upon it, there will be no interference with America on the part of England or France. Though the war interferes with our merchants to-day, it will be better for us in the end, for the country has got to learn to depend on herself and develop her own resources. But I am sorry not to be at home to see the matter through. God help the weak and prosper the right, and send the wrong-doer the punishment he deserves. I do think the South comes rightfully by this success on the principle that the Devil helps his own at first. Let those laugh who win. It was natural that all this playing at soldiers should result in a shameful defeat; but we shall see what will be the end."

This was the first battle of Bull Run of which she writes, and the allusion "playing at soldiers" bears reference to the impression made upon her by her visit to the camps around Washington, and to the evidence they afforded, even to her inexperienced eyes, of crudeness and mismanagement.

During this summer she made various excursions, visiting Buxton, Knowsley, Haddon Hall, Chatsworth, Matlock, Dovedale, stopping at Izaak Walton's Inn, and finally settling down for a time at the Isle of Wight, from which place we have one or two interesting letters. Referring to a visit she had just made to London, where, as she says, she found "the purest spiritual pleasure," she gives her impressions of the Isle of Wight:—

"Here," she says, "is the sweetest air material that human being ever found. O, a week of rare delight! In my whole English life I have never felt seven such days of golden glory as we passed there. We were at a gentleman farmer's in the heart of the island, far away from everything and everybody but ourselves. The weather was divine, — not warm, not cold, but such as enabled us to wander in the copses in our morning jackets, or sit under the huge old pear-tree on the lawn, in front of the dear little seven-gabled house, reading, or up in an upper room (fitted up as a writing-room) doing up my correspondence, with the sweet sounds of birds, and sweet smell of wild clematis which wanders up in streaming whiteness over the gabled windows. O, it was a rare week! I only wanted you to see how well I was; how good and clear and true the country makes me, when I can throw aside the carking cares which almost invariably surround me in a city *any*where."

Another letter from this chosen locality is full of pith and matter. The "clearness and truth" which she feels in the midst of nature possesses her spirit and moves her pen. She writes words of real wisdom.

"I only wish there were less excitement for you; you lack repose, and never will be strong until you are shut up in 'some boundless contiguity of shade," where you will see no soul but your own, and sit communing with it, face to face, in unlimited silence. When you begin to study yourself, then will you begin to have repose. When you shall find that calm *in*teriorly, you will be happier and less troubled that you cannot 'long together hold to any fixed principle of action.' You know so well what is *right*, that I do not fear these backslidings. Every human being (more or less) must have such; the more generous the nature the more likely to have them; but to know them and to try to cure them, to see the flutterings of the conscience and try to help it, — these are the footholds by which (though you fall back many and many a weary time) you shall mount to the excellence your heart covets. There are few entirely perfect characters, few souls so white as to bear full sunshine. The wish to be better, the strong desire to live higher, purer lives, the determination to be worthy in spite of lets and hindrances, the small conquest over self to-day, shall lead to the larger to-morrow, until we get nearer to our true mosaic of life, — the one spot which we have been destined to fill worthily, highly, perfectly, without flaw, if we would follow the Creator's law for us. We cannot commit a wrong without its punishment following closely at the heels; we cannot break a law of eternal justice, however ignorantly, but throughout the entire universe will there be a jar of discord which will so trouble the divine harmonies that in the rebound we shall find each man his own hell! The sooner we arrive at this knowledge, the sooner we take the certainty to our souls, the sooner do our lives begin to assume the square allotted to us. To try to be better is to be better; and the consciousness that we are 'backsliding,' if our souls are true, good, worthy souls, will help us to hold the faster the next time to that which is really true and good. God knows how hard *I* have striven in my time to be good and true and worthy. God knows the struggles I have had. God knows how unworthily I

have kept the promises I have made to myself and to him. He alone knows the worth. He knows the trials. He is the judge, and he still loves me! I see and know his love by the blessings which surround me: my needs, my requirements, are met; my struggles with circumstances have been many and sore; my life has known its weak places, but I strove to come out of them; I have come out of them. If I am a coward, I am compelled to find my safety in flight sometimes; but I shall be less a coward day by day as I bring myself face to face with my soul, and God will help me to see better as I 'learn to labor and to *wait*.' Ah, what profound wisdom is in that little sentence! To *labor* is to love God, and lead ever higher lives. To labor is easy compared to *waiting*. How hard it is to wait! 'Patience is all the passion of great hearts.'"

The above letters bear date August 30 and September 7. On the 12th, Miss Cushman left London for Paris, en route to Rome; on the 21st I find a graphic description of a visit to Rosa Bonheur's studio, which had been arranged for her by a mutual friend in London:—

"Did I tell you that I was to go to Rosa Bonheur's on the Saturday, or had I been the day I wrote? If not, you will want to know about her. On Friday I received a letter from London, telling me that Mademoiselle Rosa would be ready to receive me the next day, if I would take the earliest train to Fontainebleau. Consequently at 10.40 behold me starting from the hotel on my way to the *chemin de fer:* an hour from the hotel to the station, an hour and a half on the rail, and we arrived at Thomery, where we found Mademoiselle Rosa's own little sociable (head off) waiting for us, and we were driven by a country-boy, like mad, through a beautiful portion of the forest; arriving at a fine old country-house, or château, which she has bought, and added a very fine building and tower to it, in which there is the most delightful studio you ever saw in your life. She designed it all. Under it she has the stables

of her animals, — ponies, cows, sheep, horses, oxen, Scotch cattle, in fact everything she can ever want. On arriving we mounted the stairs to the studio, and she received us at the top of them, dressed in a piqué dress of white cross-barred with lavender. The dress, I am sure, was a knickerbocker suit of this stuff, over which she had evidently put a skirt (very short) of the same for propriety's sake, for she did not seem to be over-comfortable in it. She received us more graciously than I can describe to you. *The face is lovely*, refined, *not French*, and full of intense feeling; bright, clear, truthful eyes, an exquisitely cut nose, thin but mobile lips, beautiful teeth, little hands, but with a true grip; altogether the most charming *great* woman I ever saw. She and Mademoiselle Micas, her friend, entertained us most agreeably; we saw pictures, sketches, drawings, proofs, everything. Her manner of showing one of the sketches was characteristic. It was her latest production, and drawn on several pieces of paper. It represented a flock of sheep huddled together in the moonlight, with firelight shining from door and window of the shepherd's hut. She coolly placed the different sections of this study on the floor, stepping over and around them while arranging them to her satisfaction with her foot. Then she invited us to lunch, and there was brought up in the most simple style possible a dish of fruit, with wine, which was placed upon a tall studio stool; around it we sat and munched grapes (her own grapes) and pears, and talked art, philosophy, and mutual admiration for an hour. When we rose to depart she begged us to stay to dinner; but we wisely saw that we had made a good impression, and came away. She drove us to the station in a sort of cabriolet, with seats running along the sides, and drawn by one of those wonderful horses which she paints so well, solid and massive, with a deep groove all down his back. On the way she begged us to have our photographs taken by her own particular man *for her*, gave us roses, — O, such roses! — and graciously waited outside the enclosure until our train started. The last glimpse we had of her she was holding her

hat aloft in salutation, like a gallant little man. The studio she has built is perfectly splendid: oak panelling all over, oak floor, beautiful carved furniture, a fireplace large enough for six people to sit inside, the sides of it supported by two enormous bloodhounds modelled by herself and cut in cacu-stone. The floor is covered everywhere with skins of wild animals. O, what a weak and poor description of a most charming day!"

These flying visits to Paris, each spring and autumn, on her way to and from Rome, gave Miss Cushman a welcome opportunity of seeing whatever of new and interesting the theatres presented. Her enjoyment of the French stage was intense and appreciative, and she rarely passed through Paris without finding at some one of the numerous theatres a veritable sensation. They were never wanting in novelty; her love of her profession made her catholic in her taste and judgment; she went everywhere and enjoyed all. At the Théâtre Française was always to be found the classical and legitimate drama. Miss Cushman enjoyed the subtleties and even the mannerisms of this famous stage; with her usual zest, she relished its finish and its thoroughness, for thoroughness was one of her own special attributes; but she thought, as she returned to it, year after year, that the finish was becoming conventional and the thoroughness affected; the naturalness was so labored as to reach the opposite extreme; the simplicity so simple as to approach absurdity; every movement, every situation, so studied, the artificiality so marked and apparent, that at first it was like coming into another atmosphere and breathing a different air. After a while this peculiar impression wore off; one became accustomed to the condensed air, and it was evident that on those who lived with it and in it, night after night, it produced no such effect; but to eyes and senses accustomed

to the natural and spontaneous acting of the Italian school it was very striking, and far from true or real.

At the minor theatres — less hampered by prestige and precedent, less classical, but more true to nature and fact — she found infinite satisfaction. There the inborn French necessity for completeness and *vraisemblance* found its expression less in subtleties of manner than in exactness of mise-en-scène, in perfection of dress, scenery, and accessories, making of the historical dramas produced at these theatres a succession of the most wonderful and faithful pictures.

Among many such attractive entertainments my memory recalls one in especial. I think it was at the Théâtre Porte St. Martin, or it might be the Gymnase. We saw a *petite drame*, of three acts, called *Les beaux Messieurs du Bois Doré*, adapted from the novel of that name by Madame George Sand herself, and acted in by two of the greatest favorites of the time, namely, Bocage and Jane Ellsler. It was a consummate little jewel, exquisitely put upon the stage, exquisitely acted, and complete, with an artistic perfection without flaw. This little reminiscence may fitly introduce here a letter in which she speaks of George Sand and of her feeling towards her.

"I like you to find in George Sand *principles*. She is, in truth, the most wonderful preacher, and if she had been an American or an Englishwoman with that intellect, her position would have been up to her principles. But I do not feel that we have any right to judge the life of a foreigner by our own fixed laws of society. My one sole reason for not knowing or seeking to know her has been my reverence. I cannot speak French; I cannot make myself sufficiently understood to intrude upon the life and time of a great woman like Madame Dudevant, and I do not find they understand or appreciate the admiration of foreigners. This used to be my feel-

ing even with Mrs. Browning. I never felt that I could bring anything worthy to exchange with her, and I became conscious, which spoiled my ability and her appreciation of me. Unless I can utterly forget myself, I am as nothing; and this is why you care for me, why my own friends love me and judge me kindly; because, when I can talk freely upon the subjects which interest and occupy me, without a thought of myself or the impression I am making, all is well enough, and my life, my character through my life, makes itself *felt*. To George Sand I should bring nothing but my reverence and my admiration. She would produce in me the same feeling and the same silence she did in Mrs. Browning. Therefore I have hesitated to know her. But one of these days we will go together to see her and thank her for all that she has been to both of us; for to me she revealed my religion, and she has ever been able to produce nothing but good in me."

Among the letters of this period I find many expressions of Miss Cushman's passionate love for children, without some allusion to which this memoir would be very incomplete. It was one of the most marked traits in her character. She was in sympathy with children, and could be a child with them. They loved her and gave her their confidence, and she was never so occupied that she could not give time and strength to them. Her nephew's children were to her like her own. She called herself their "big mamma," and she would travel any distance to be present at their birth, even on one occasion crossing the ocean for that purpose. It was her great joy to be the first to receive them in her arms, and she had a feeling that this ceremony made them more her own.

Her first visitors in the morning were always the little children, and she had smiles and songs and merry games for them, even when at times her sufferings confined her to her bed. No amount of trouble was too great to give

them pleasure; their birthdays were all carefully remembered, and marked with gifts and tokens of never-failing kindness. Her own birthday fête was an occasion of great ceremony, and always made much of for the sake of the children; and the little people would be very busy, long beforehand, preparing their tokens of love for dear "big mamma." Always something done with their own hands gave her most pleasure, and, whatever it was, would be received with acclamations. This was one of her many special charms, — the hearty and kindly reception of whatever was done to give her pleasure. The motive and meaning was everything, the mere value nothing; and it is most interesting to find, among the gatherings of her busy life, these simple tokens, carefully cherished, of the friendships, affections, and devoted appreciations which blessed and glorified her life.

That her thoughts were also full of deep solicitude for the future welfare and proper training of these children, her letters bear ample evidence. The maternal and protecting element which was so large in her "found ample room and verge enough," in her loving care for these children, and not only for them, but wherever she could extend her beneficent and helping hand. There was a sense of protection in her atmosphere which all felt, hardly knowing why they felt it; but drawing them to it, with the sure instinct of *trust*. What marvel, then, that the little children clung to her and loved her! To these children she has left an inheritance which cannot be taken away from them. The means which it was her pleasure to gather together for them may take wings and vanish away; but the good name, the honorable record, no one can take from them, and they have in it a high shining beacon to light their steps upward and onward in the path she so earnestly desired they might tread.

How much she thought of the sacredness of the maternal trust is expressed with all her own fervor in the following letter: —

"All that you say about your finding your own best expression in and through the little life which is confided to you is good and true, and I am so happy to see how you feel on the subject. I think a mother who devotes herself to her child, in watching its culture and keeping it from baleful influences, is educating and cultivating herself at the same time. *No artist work* is so high, so noble, so grand, so enduring, so important for all time, as the making of *character* in a child. You have your own work to do, the largest possible expression. No statue, no painting, no acting, can reach it, and it embodies each and all the arts. Clay of God's fashioning is given into your hands to mould to perfectness. Is this not something grand to think of? No matter about yourself, — only make yourself worthy of God's sacred trust, and you will be doing his work, — and that is all that human beings *ought* to care to live for. Am I right?"

She left Rome on June 4th of this year, much later than usual, but finding no great oppression or discomfort from the heat. Much misapprehension with regard to the Roman climate exists in the minds of many. Long experience justifies the assertion that no city in the world is more generally healthy than Rome. Serious cases of illness among visitors are rare, and these can generally be easily traced to imprudence and thoughtlessness under new conditions. Strangers visiting Rome in ignorance or carelessness of sanitary laws do things which they would never have dreamed of doing at home: keep irregular hours, neglect their food, exhaust themselves with sight-seeing, pass from cold atmospheres to hot, and *vice versa*, without precaution, remain out late in the night-air, and then are surprised at the consequences which naturally ensue.

Italians are particularly careful in these respects. They avoid even passing from the sunny to the shaded side of the street, and they warn all strangers to beware of the chill which comes over the air as the sun sinks below the horizon. This chill lasts only for a time; after an hour or so the temperature becomes equalized again, and the danger ceases. But in these lovely nights of Italy — the sun sinking in a blaze of glory, the mountains and plain opal tinted in rose and pale azure, the moon rising gloriously and flooding all things with a light only known in Italy — it is difficult to convince any one that danger may lurk under all this beauty. But, taking the average, very little real harm comes of it. Thirteen years' experience surely justifies some confidence. During all these winters, in a large family of children, servants, and constant visitors, no case of serious illness ever occurred. The usual ailments incident to humanity in all places visited us, and Miss Cushman's health was gradually working out the hereditary problem of transmitted evil; but there was no appearance of any ailment peculiar to the soil: on the contrary, uncommon freedom from all forms of ailment. Cases of fever did occur among our friends and acquaintances; but whatever was of purely Roman origin took no worse form than that so well known among ourselves as chills and fever, — disagreeable enough, no doubt, but not dangerous. Where the type ran into typhoid, or assumed the malignant character called *pernizziosa*, it could always be traced back to Naples, where it belongs, and where there are elements admitted to be of a nature capable of developing any malarial tendency. People going exhausted from Rome to Naples, and living there the same life of unrest and excitement, were predisposed to imbibe any floating mischief; and, returning to Rome with the seeds planted and ready to burst forth, Rome took all the credit of the result.

Persons may go to Rome and live as well and as safely as elsewhere, at almost any season, with proper care and prudence. Even the summer heat is not as unendurable as with us, because it is more steady and continuous. Many families who cannot leave Rome in summer remain year after year with entire impunity. Some artists remain from choice, and say they enjoy immensely the calm, the rest, the opportunity for steady work, which they can never get in the gay Roman winter. The early autumn, when the regular rainy season sets in, is perhaps the least healthy period of the year; but is not that the same everywhere? Decaying vegetation saturated with moisture is a factor for harm in most places.

The real harm which lies in the Roman climate is of a different sort. A long residence in Rome is apt to tell upon the nerves: the blood grows thin, the general tone is lowered and this is the meaning of the phrase *dolce far niente*. The climate produces the necessity for this "sweet idleness," and those who will not yield to it, like our country-people, who carry their own nervous, restless energies with them wherever they go, are forced at last to submit to the *genus loci* by impaired nerves and exhausted vitality.

These few words may be of use to many who, in contemplating a visit to Rome, are beset with fears and doubts on these subjects. Let them be set at rest. Rome is probably the best-drained, the best-watered city in the civilized world, and since the Italian occupation is rapidly becoming equally well built and comfortable.

Miss Cushman speaks of Rome and the Roman climate in this wise:—

"The worst feature of living in Rome is the being forced to go away for the summer; and next, or perhaps first, is the constant strain upon the nerves, through the social changes

of each year. There is no resident English or American society here, and every season brings fresh people to learn to know, and takes away those whom you have learned to know and to like; and thus every year is a breaking of fresh ground. When one lives in Boston, or St. Louis, or London, you have a sort of social foundation to which you belong, and upon which you every year build, either some fantastic summer-house of a pretty, gay, enthusiastic foreigner, or a good solid family room of an old English country gentleman and lady, whom you meet at some friend's house, and who thereby come indorsed to you with substantial security. Here you are without a foundation, but your own house and home and its inmates, and every year you are a prey to the adventurer who comes to speculate, the needy annuitant who comes to live cheap, or the ambitious parents who come to marry their daughters; the callow parson, who comes to find a wife with a little money; the small, very small heiress, who comes to fish for a husband; the ignorant and rich American jobber, who comes to play the patron to art, and buy bad copies and still worse originals; and the vulgar and pretentious wives and daughters of such, who fall victims to hungry Italians in search of dances, suppers, and champagne. And such is this Roman mosaic, which is made up winter after winter in the same design, only differing each year in the value of the material out of which it is made. But this is giving you only the dark side; it has its bright one, and I would rather live in Rome than anywhere else in the world for the winter months, although I contend that the atmosphere is nervous and enervating, and that constitutions living here, and indulging in all the social enjoyments, are sooner sapped than elsewhere. Still, the sunshine is so bright, the cold weather lasts such a short time, the skies are so clear, the spring so early, the ability to go out every day in the winter at some hour in an open carriage so pleasant; the rides are so enticing, the country so beautiful to ride over, the hills so lovely to look upon under almost every change and shade of weather, the

Mrs. Grundies so scarce, the artist society (of the best) so nice, that it is hard to choose or find any other place so attractive."

I extract from a letter of March 16, 1862, Miss Cushman's expressions of feeling in reference to the Northern successes, the news of which were now coming over the ocean.

"I can hardly describe to you the effect upon us of the political news. It only shows us how our nerves have been strained to the utmost, how faith has been tested to the verge of infidelity! It has been so hard amid the apparent successes on the other side, the defection, the weakness of men on our side, the willingness of even the best to take advantage of the needs of the government, the ridicule of sympathizers with the South on this side, the abuse of the English journals, and the utter impossibility of beating into the heads of individual English that there could be *no right* in the seceding party, — all has been so hard, and we have fought so valiantly for our faith, have so tired and tried ourselves in talking and showing our belief, that when the news came day after day of our successes, and at last your letter, I could not read the account aloud, and tears, — hot but refreshing tears of joy fell copiously upon the page. O, I am too thankful; and I am too anxious to come home! Never in my life have I felt any bondage so hard as this which would make it wrong for me to go to America this summer; my soul aches to get to the States, to see all those who have worked out this noble, grand end! For, as I saw the end through the clouds (for which, by the by, I was ridiculed by some, who wittily remarked that I might see farther than most people, living nearer where the sun rose, or words to that effect), so must I be able to see it clearer now. But I have faith that all things which are done upon earnest conviction are and *will be for the best*, and so my coming abroad was right; but I cannot help my yearnings, and I do so long to come to America this summer. I never cared half so much for America

before; but I feel that now I love it dearly, and want to see it and to live in it."

On her journey to Rome in the autumn of this year Miss Cushman stopped for a day at Spezzia, and was entertained by Mrs. Somerville, who was living there then. Of this visit she speaks in one of her letters.

"We passed the day at Spezzia, and in the evening went to take tea with that most learned astronomer and kindest, most genial of ladies, Mrs. Somerville, who now, at the age of eighty-two, is writing a book upon the 'forces.' I saw her write her name under a *carte de visite* with the greatest calm and precision, in a hand without tremor, like copperplate. Mary Somerville is one of the wonders of our age, and I am most glad to have seen her."

In an earlier part of this memoir some allusion has been made to Miss Cushman's opinions on religious subjects, to her large tolerance, her unaffected piety, and her respect for all sincere conviction under whatever form or creed she found it. Among her letters of 1862, I find one which gives her own views on the subject in her own words. It is written from Rome.

"To-morrow will be the last day of the year! I am glad when a winter is over, though sad to think I am so much nearer to the end. The days fly by so rapidly; the Saturdays when I must post come round so soon! I stand sometimes appalled at the thought of how my life is flying away, and how soon will come the end to all of this probation, and of how little I have done or am doing to deserve all the blessings by which I am surrounded. But that God is perfect, and that my love for him is without fear, I should be troubled in the thought that I am not doing all I should, *in* this sphere, to make myself worthy of happiness in the next. Do you quite believe in angels with feather wings and flowing draperies, and perfect

beauty, and a heaven in the clouds? — or do you believe that man, a little lower than the angels, animated by the 'heat spark,' wears out his physical in the improvement of his moral, and that this 'heat spark' then returns to the original centre of all, to be again given out, through its own purification, helping thus to leaven the whole mass, and so doing God's work? — or what do you believe? You say you 'feel the need of a saviour'! Do you think *Christ* more your saviour, except that he has been the founder of a creed, which has been a sign and symbol for so many who *needed* a sign and symbol? Do you believe that God was more the father of Christ than he is of you? Do you need any mediator between you and your Father? Can the Saviour Christ help you more than the Saviour Conscience? I don't believe in *Atheism;* so you see one may doubt even disbelief; but I should be glad to know what your creed is, if you put it into any form. Creeds invented by man may and do find echoes, as we find around us those who can give us better counsel than we can find for ourselves in ordinary matters; how much more, then, in those which are purely spiritual. But *creeds are creeds*, after all; and whether propounded by Jesus, or any other of *woman born*, they are simply scaffoldings which surround the temple, and by which different thinkers mount to their distinct and separate entrances. I find it possible to go to any church and find God! A good and earnest man, though a *self-elected* priest, who leads a pure and noble life, who works for the good of others rather than his own gratification, who leads me to think higher and better things, is my saviour; all great, good, noble, high aspirations *save me.* Vainglory in myself or my doings, self-assertion, pride, are often but the effects of education; and though they may be and are the clogs of flesh around me, they cannot prevent me from seeing God any and every where, and they cannot prevent me from being *saved, if* I will! O, this question is so difficult, so hard; and yet, if we can prove by our lives that we *love* God in our neighbor, it is so easy! We are asked by all believers to love

God, and this is *all*. If we love, we cannot wound! God is perfect; we cannot hurt him as we do one another, for he sees in, and around, and through, and the *motive* is the hurt. I believe that some of the purest lives are among those whom we call *Deists*, — who believe in God, but not in revealed religion. No one can doubt *a cause*, and there must have been a *first cause*, and whether we call it God, or nature, or *law of the universe*, it amounts to the same thing; and, trust me, every human being believes in a God. For me, I believe in all things good coming from God, in all forms, in all ways; my faith is firm in him and his love. I believe in instincts marvellously. I doubt any power to take from me the love of God, and I would guard particularly against the evil effects of injudicious or careless education for myself or others. Original sin is the excess, or weakness, or folly, of parents, which entails upon us evils which we have to combat, and struggle harder in consequence of; hence the necessity of each human being striving to lead a pure life, a life of unselfishness, a life of devotion to — well — doing everything a human being can do for the largest good of all.

"A devotion which drives one to a nunnery, to a life of self-seclusion, of prayer *actual*, and nothing else, does not seem to me *devotion* such as God needs and wants; and yet it may be that this example is also necessary in God's world, and each man or woman may be doing his work! But I must not write on such topics. I am not sufficiently clear in my expression to help anybody, and I only intended at first to reply to the last sentence of your letter, in which you spoke of 'your need of a Saviour,' and of your going to such or such a church. Well, it matters very little. All thinking human beings (women especially) have to pass through all these thinkings. The only thing to be guarded against is the narrowing influence of Mrs. Grundy. Think in, but be sure also to think *out*. Many young people are apt to jump into one of these enclosures, and then, for *fear*, are afraid to jump or crawl out, — not from fear of God, but fear of the humans around them! Don't suffer yourself to be narrowed in your thinkings. If you do,

it is because of some part of your mind not having been healthily exercised, and thus the restraint day by day will cramp you more. I don't like too much this pride of intellect, any more than I do the idea of any and every man being able to be a *priest* simply because he *chooses* that as his vocation. There are many priests who never see churches, as there are many devils within the fold! Did you ever read very thinkingly "Spiridion" (George Sand)? She was in this coil when she wrote it, and, being greatly imaginative, of course the book is very wide of the mark for many; but it is possible to get something from it in spite of its mysticism.

I go to the English Church here, because I think it right to go somewhere, and I cannot understand Italian well enough to follow *their* preaching, though the earnestness and intensity and eloquence of the priests often stirs me to my soul, in spite of the trammels of language. Therefore I go to the English Church, and I observe their observances, because I think it is unkind, by any resistance on my part when I am among them, to raise doubts or questions or remarks when it is unnecessary and productive of no good result. But their scaffolding is no more for me, and does not influence me any more, than that of the Catholic or the Presbyterian. God saw the creatures he created; he knew their capabilities; he will judge us each by our light. The child shut away from light is not answerable for its blindness. Education is the influences around our childhood, not merely books and school, but example, and we are only responsible according to our light. But we must not wilfully shut our eyes when we can be led into the light, which is to be tempered to our abilities; only don't condemn others because they do not see as we do, and we are not able to see with their eyes. Every human being who goes to sleep awakes believing in God, whatever he may call it. There are more good *Deists* in the world than show themselves, and there is more pride than one wishes to see; but education is to blame, not instinct, and so we have to go so far back to find the original plague-spot, that one is apt to sit down by the wayside in terror at the journey!"

CHAPTER IX.

"The heart and hand both open and both free,
For what he has he gives, what thinks he shows."
Troilus and Cressida.

"He hath a tear for pity,
And a hand, open as day, for melting charity."
Love's Labor Lost.

IN one of the letters of this period (1861) we find the following reference to her cardinal point of faith, namely, that real needs are sooner or later met: —

"What you say of '*needs being met*' is curious. From my very earliest days of reasoning, which began with me when I began to suffer, I have felt that thought grow and expand in my soul until it is the foundation of my creed, my religion. Upon that my faith, which nothing could shake, is built. If I have not at some time or other said this to you (and I feel sure I have), and it has entered your mind and taken root without your having noted the day and the hour, so that it seems to you a natural growth, and so is more valuable to you (as all best things come from within), I wonder much, for it seems to have been the one natural thing I should say to you to justify my actions. On the 8th of February I wrote a long letter to Mrs. Carlyle, which had this for its text: 'There never yet came a real need to a nation or an individual which was not in due time met.' This was apropos to something flattering she had said about '*my coming to her at the right*

moment.' And it would almost seem that the thought uttered then by me had reached and passed her, and gone on to you for you to send it back to me. 'Bread upon the waters,' with 'Eucharistic meanings.' Believe me, it is the truest philosophy and faith to live by. It does not prevent us working for ourselves to the attainment of our needs, because we cannot know what we can do with or without until we have tried. This 'instinct striving because its nature is to strive' is our surety of the presence of God in our souls, ever drawing towards its centre, Himself, in the completion of its rôle,—if I may use such a term,—and only the weak and poor sink down by the way. The brave and rich nature strives for the accomplishment of what it deems its needs, and thus breaks down barriers for the light of faith to enter. This faith, being 'all that we truly *need*, we shall *have*.' All that is worth having must be striven for; in the strife we often find joys by the wayside undreamed of, which sometimes put away the fancied need, and one blesses God for the better wisdom and goodness, and gains a sublimer faith. Are you able to understand me, or am I writing in a wild way which you cannot follow? One of these days we will compare notes as to the springing and growth of this idea in our souls. But, believe me, it is a good faith to live and die by, if needs must be to die."

One more extract closes the correspondence of this year; it has reference to her deep disappointment in the loss of her nephew's first child, and goes back into the troubles and griefs of her own early life.

"There was a time," she writes, "in my life of girlhood, when I thought I had been called upon to bear the very hardest thing that can come to a woman. A very short time served to show me, in the harder battle of life which was before me, that this had been but a spring storm, which was simply to help me to a clearer, better, richer, and more productive summer. If I had been spared this early trial, I should never have been so earnest and faithful in my art;

I should have still been casting about for the 'counterpart,' and not given my entire *self* to my work, wherein and alone I have reached any excellence I have ever attained, and through which alone I have received my reward. God helped me in my art isolation, and rewarded me for recognizing *him* and helping myself. This passed on; and this happened at a period in my life when most women (or children, rather) are looking to but one end in life, — an end no doubt wisest and best for the largest number, but which would not have been wisest and best for *my* work, and so for God's work; for I know he does not fail to *set* me his work to do, and helps me to do it, and helps others to help *me*. (Do you see this tracing back, and then forward, to an eternity of good, and do you see how better and better one can become in recognizing one's self as a minister of the Almighty to faithfully carry out our part of his great plan according to our strength and ability?) O, believe we cannot live one moment for ourselves, one moment of selfish repining, and not be failing him at that moment, hiding the God-spark in us, letting the flesh conquer the spirit, the evil dominate the good.

Then after this first spring storm and hurricane of young disappointment came a lull, during which I actively pursued what became a passion, — my art. Then I lost my younger brother, upon whom I had begun to build most hopefully, as I had reason. He was by far the cleverest of my mother's children. He had been born into greater poverty than the others; he received his young impressions through a different atmosphere; he was keener, more artistic, more impulsive, more generous, more full of genius. I lost him by a cruel accident, and again the world seemed to *liquefy* beneath my feet, and the waters went over my soul. It became necessary that I should suffer *bodily* to cure my heart-bleed. I placed myself professionally where I found and knew all my mortifications in my profession, which seemed for the time to strew ashes over the loss of my child-brother (for he was my child, and loved me best in all the world), thus conquering my art,

which, God knows, has never failed me, — never failed to bring me rich reward, — never failed to bring me comfort. I conquered my grief and myself. *Labor* saved me then and always, and so I proved the eternal goodness of God. I digress too much; but you will see how, in looking back to my own early disappointments, I can recognize all the good which came out of them, and can ask you to lay away all repinings with our darling, and hope (as we must) in God's wisdom and goodness, and ask him to help us to a clearer vision and truer knowledge of his dealings with us; to teach us to believe that we are lifted up to him better through our losses than our gains. May it not be that heaven *is* nearer, the passage from earth less hard, and life less seductive to us, in consequence of the painless passing of this cherub to its true home, lent us but for a moment, to show how pure must be our lives to fit us for such companionship? And thus, although in one sense it would be well for us to put away the sadness of this thought if it would be likely to enervate us, in another sense, if we consider it rightly, if we look upon it worthily, we have an angel in God's house to help us to higher and purer thinkings, to nobler aspirations, to more sublime sacrifices than we have ever known before."

The winter of 1862–63 was not marked by any special event. The Roman winters passed in the usual routine of social life, only each year more full and active and busy. The circle of friendships widened and broadened and deepened. Where there was a constant giving out of good-will and kindness, the return was naturally "full measure, filled up, pressed down, and running over"; and the effort necessary to meet this drain upon her strength and energy, great as these were, overtaxed her nerves more than she was aware of at the time, though those nearest to her saw it and felt it, and often remonstrated against it earnestly. It seemed, therefore, well when she decided, toward the middle of the winter, to make another journey

to America, one of her chief reasons, if not *the* chief one, being her desire to act for the benefit of the Sanitary Commission. Her heart and thoughts were with the country in its hour of trial, and as with her, strength, will, energy, all worked with the impulse of the heart in straightforward endeavor, she suffered no obstacle to stand between her and her determination to do whatever lay in her own special power to aid in the sacred cause.

It was no light thing to do; there were many lets and hindrances in the way, — the feelings and the needs of many to be consulted, thousands of miles to be traversed, and much labor and weariness of spirit to be encountered. But she was one of those spirits born to act, and not to be acted upon; when once firmly persuaded that a certain course was to be pursued, she never looked back, but went steadily, persistently on, meeting and baffling obstacles, and conquering success by going bravely forth to meet it.

In pursuance of this object she sailed for America on June 6th, and acted for the Sanitary Fund on the 12th of September at Philadelphia, on the 25th in Boston, and on the 27th of October in New York, as well as in Washington and Baltimore. Her own statement of the result of her labors is contained in the following letter: —

"New York, October 31, 1863.

"Dear Dr. Bellows: I have at last received the accounts and 'returns' from the benefit given by me at the Academy of Music, New York, on the 27th instant. I have pleasure in enclosing to you a check for the proceeds, after deducting expenses for printing, advertisements, etc., according to enclosed memoranda. The stockholders of the Academy, in the most generous manner returned to me $150, making the rent on that occasion only $100. I beg to refer you to the en-

closed note from Dr. J. F. Gray, accompanied by a check for $50. A little more courage on my part might have increased this sum considerably; but I am very thankful to the public for enabling me to make even this amount of offering to your noble charity.

"Enclosed please find acknowledgments from the agents of your Commission in Philadelphia, Boston, and Washington.

"I take the liberty of recapitulating these sums to you, the President of the Commission, that I may recall to your mind the conversation I had with you expressive of the desire that you should spare a portion of this amount to the Western Sanitary Commission, from whose agents I have received very touching appeals. My engagements in the East have prevented me from visiting Chicago and St. Louis, as I fully intended doing, where I should have asked from their individual populations the same help for their cause which the Eastern cities have given me for yours. Will you let my inability to go there plead for them if you can spare anything? I know no distinction of North, East, South, or West; it is all my country, and where there is most need, there do I wish the proceeds of my labor to be given. No one knows so well as you where there is most need; to you, therefore, I commit my offering, and with every good wish for your success in this and all things,

"I am very truly yours,

"CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN."

Dr. Bellows issued in return the following card:—

"NEW YORK, November 7, 1863.

"The President of the United States Sanitary Commission feels it to be a great pleasure to call universal attention to the patriotic munificence of our distinguished countrywoman, Miss Charlotte Cushman, who, from the vessel in which she leaves our shores, modestly sends him the full account of her splendid donations to the sick and wounded through the United States Sanitary Commission. They are as follows:—

Benefit at Academy of Music, Philadelphia, September 12	$1,314.27
Benefit at Academy of Music, Boston, September 26	2,020.75
Benefit at Grover's Theatre, Washington, October 17	1,800.00
Benefit at Ford's Theatre, Baltimore, October 19 [this small receipt is attributable to the negligence and carelessness of the manager. C. C.]	360.00
Benefit at Academy of Music, New York, October 22	2,772.27
Total	$8,267.29

"This magnificent product of the genius of Miss Cushman, devoted to the relief of our suffering soldiers, is only the most striking exemplification yet made of woman's power and will to do her full part in the national struggle. Inspired with love and pity, American women have been, by their labors and sympathies, a real part of the army, and their ranks, under leaders like Miss Cushman, will not break while their sons, brothers, and husbands are faithful in the field.

"It is due to Miss Charlotte Cushman to say that this extraordinary gift of money, so magically evoked by her spell, is but the least part of the service which, ever since the war began, she has been rendering our cause in Europe. Her earnest faith in the darkest hours, her prophetic confidence in our success, her eloquent patriotism in all presences, have been potent influences abroad, and deserve and command the gratitude of the whole nation.

"In compliment to the noble woman whose generous gift I here publicly acknowledge, the Commission has ordered the whole amount to be expended through our home branches in those cities where the several sums were contributed, that this money may continue as long as possible to be sanctified by the touch only of women's hands. It will thus reach our soldiers in battle-fields and hospitals charged with the blessings, prayers, and tears of American womanhood.

"HENRY W. BELLOWS,
"*President United States Sanitary Commission.*"

After Miss Cushman's return to Rome, in the winter of the following year, she was honored by the presentation

of a large and superb album, containing in all about fifty paintings in oil and water colors, which were contributed by some of the leading artists of New York, Boston, and Philadelphia to the great Central Fair held in the latter city for the benefit of the Sanitary Commission. The paintings were contributed with the understanding that the album should be subscribed for and presented to Miss Cushman by friends and citizens of those cities in which she had acted for the cause. The book is elegantly bound, and is a valuable and much-prized record of those stirring times; with it came three smaller volumes, each containing the names of the subscribers to this compliment in the several cities.

In the course of this season Miss Cushman read the ode on the occasion of the inauguration of the great organ in the Music Hall, Boston. A friend writes of this event: "I never shall forget how beautiful she looked that night, and how the organ and everything else seemed small beside her, as she stood on the platform, so simple and so grand in her black silk dress, which she was so fond of."

These little reminiscences and enthusiasms of friendship are very precious; they give the absolute realities more than anything else: the mind is impressed; the heart awakened; emotion, which is the grand magnetic element whereby the real and ideal are fused together and made one, springs up and recognizes for the time whatever of best and truest and holiest is before it; spirit touches spirit, and a mutual and joyous recognition takes place. So there is no higher joy than the heartfelt appreciation and love which Carlyle has immortalized under the name of "hero-worship," and no lower plane than a systematic and cynical depreciation of its God-given truth and beauty. Miss Cushman lived and wrought through

this power, preserving a marvellous equilibrium of the real and ideal in herself, and always able through emotion to establish that higher relation with the hearts and souls of others which is the highest gift of human consciousness. Whatever may seem extreme or exaggerated in this volume is due to the writer's high appreciation of this great gift, and her belief that it is the keynote to a character which could not be fully illustrated without it.

On November 3d she sailed again for Liverpool, and on the 11th of December started for Rome, arriving there on the 22d. Some few letters give expression to her thinkings and doings. In one she alludes to the Roman question, then beginning to occupy all minds. Writing to her friend, Miss Fanny Seward, she speaks of the hurry and rush of her life in Rome, and the difficulty she finds in doing justice to her friends at a distance, the pressure near at hand being so great.

"If only the day could be an hour or two longer! But Time the healer (Time the killer) flies faster here in Rome than anywhere else in the world, I believe, or else it is that the social duties and occupations press more closely than elsewhere, and an engagement or claim upon our time treads more nearly upon the heels of another than in any other city they are allowed to do. Here, the population in winter being mostly a floating one, everybody has to compress a great deal of doing and being into a shorter space. The *ought to do* rules supreme. As I once heard an exhausted tourist exclaim languidly, when told she really *ought* to see this and that and the other object of attraction, — 'O, I have *ought to'd* until I am fairly worn out and cannot do it any more!'

"Something, I know not what, prevents the pleasure and duty which is miles away from being performed as promptly as those which hold you by the button. I don't know whether I have ever told you that here in Rome there are or seem to

be strange differences in the value of things. For instance, the pound weight, instead of being sixteen ounces, is only twelve; the foot measure, instead of being twelve inches, is only nine; and I think, in some way, this must apply to *time* as well, so that the hour, instead of being sixty minutes long, is only forty-five! And thus I try to explain to myself why I can never bring as much to pass in Rome as in any other city. My letters to you, dear, seem always to consist of one long preface and no matter. But this arises from my disinclination to allow you to think that I am neglectful of your sweet letters, which are very grateful to me and deserve more prompt response. I will be better, more worthy of your affection and its expression, now that the whirl and hurry of the winter is over. For with Easter comes the flitting of the winter birds, when everybody who is not Roman or an artist migrates elsewhere, and we who belong to the working tribes are able to settle down to a quiet which is never known in the winter months of the Eternal City. None but artists are seen about the streets, and those only in the mornings and evenings; for the heat becomes too great to encounter in midday, and the streets look like those of a deserted town. Grass grows between the stones, and peace reigns calmer than even Christ's vicar on earth, the Pope himself, — who, by the way, is the most pugnacious and contumacious old gentleman (not to speak irreverently, to offend the eyes and ears of the powers that be, if they chance to overhaul my letter at the post-office before it leaves), and who seems disposed to fight all creation, and even believes that his militant prayers against Russia, for her behavior in Poland, has brought down from Heaven this terrible pestilence which has been raging there. They make the most of this 'outward and visible sign,' but say nothing of their having been compelled by the pressure from without to communicate with King Victor Emmanuel concerning the bishoprics in Romagna, which we look upon as the entering wedge and wait the result with what patience we may! How can they expect of a Pope to be fallible, or to

admit of the possibility of being so? And yet France goes on quietly begging him to resign the temporal power, which, by all the laws of Catholicism, he cannot do. Just as reasonable would it be to expect Mr. Lincoln to consent to a breaking up of the Union, which he had, on taking office, sworn to protect and hold intact. Only physical force can make reason among nations, which must be feared to be respected. The Roman question can only be solved by making Rome a free city, like Hamburg. There cannot be two kings of Brentford, nor King Victor and King Pope Pius in Rome.

"If it is not possible to do this, the question is no nearer solution to-day than since Italy was first land. And this is my political conclusion with regard to the country where I make my winter home. With regard to my own dearly beloved land, of which I am so proud that my heart swells and my eyes brim over as I think to-day of her might, her majesty, and the power of her long-suffering, her abiding patience, her unequalled unanimity, her resolute prudence, her inability to recognize bondage and freedom in our constitution, and her stalwart strength in forcing that which she could not obtain by reasoning! Four years and a half ago I saw through your father's eyes and heard through his voice that my faith would and must be satisfied, so that I have not since then beaten about to convince the unbelieving and the reluctant to believe, but have *looked* my faith. To-day my pride, my faith, my love of country is blessed and satisfied in the news that has flashed to us, that 'the army of Lee has capitulated!' that we are and must be one sole, undivided — not common, but *un*common — country; great, glorious, free; henceforth an honor and a power among nations, a sign and a symbol to the downtrodden peoples, and a terror to evil-doers upon earth!

"On Monday, the 24th, I received your most welcome letter of the 4th of April, giving me a graphic description of all you had been doing on those wonderful days. O, I would have given so much to have been there! Never have I so heart-ached for home; and yet, if I had been at home, I should have

felt that I wanted to hurry on to Washington to see your father and thank him with my heart and with my hands for all *his* good works. The world will never know half how your father has been the sustaining power in the government; but *I* know it, and my soul is deeply grateful. I had received a telegram from Paris telling me of the occupation of Richmond, etc., for I had kept myself informed upon all these matters before any one in Rome, and it enabled me to give comfort and joy on so many occasions. The telegrams of Sunday night, from New York, 11th, brought us news of Lee's surrender, but the papers the next morning gave details of the news of your father's accident, which carried terror to my soul for him and sadness for you in your great anxiety."

Writing from Rome, in January of this year, to her dearly beloved niece, Mrs. E. C. Cushman. She says: —

> "Another six days' work is done,
> Another [Friday] is begun
> Return, my soul, enjoy the rest," etc. (see Dr. Watts).
> Communing with a daughter blest (C. C.)

might carry out the verse and rhyme; but 'blest' does not quite signify what I would convey. '*Blessed* daughter,' I *mean*, for are you not my daughter, and am I not blessed in having such an one? A whole week has passed, and again I am at my writing-table, talking by 'word of pen' to my darlings over the sea, the dear ones who occupy so much of my thoughts and my affections. How are they? What are they doing, thinking, feeling? Do they love me best in the world? Do they want me as I want them? Do they think they have the best 'mum,' as I think I have the best children, in the world? I hope so, else there is love lost between us; and yet, we are not *common* people, we have a specialty for *adhering*, and once loving, we love always. Is it not so? I can answer for one, and you for two others, and so all is well; and my conclusion is that we are very happy people, and having only one large cause for disquiet, namely, separation. We should try to be as content as circumstances will let us be, finding our compensa-

tion in the large love and faith which we have in each other. Few people are so blessed in their relations, few people have so many causes and reasons for being thankful.

"What have I been doing since I wrote to you? Just the same routine of work, visits, etc. On Sunday I did not go to church, but stayed at home to read the three cantos of Longfellow's 'Dante,' in the January number of the 'Atlantic.' How beautiful they are! How thoroughly they impress you as being faithful! There is a simple grandeur in the language and ideas which must be of Dante. This seems to me one of Longfellow's special gifts, to render the thoughts of poets from one language to another. The accomplished scholar thinks in all languages, and thus we have a translation of Dante's 'Paradiso,' which I don't believe has ever been equalled. I am so thankful for this, not reading it in the original. You would say, then, how can you know that this is the best in the world? I can only answer, my *instincts* tell me that this is so; there *is a something* in these words which carry me to the height upon which I conceive Dante to be placed, and no other translation I ever saw has had the power to do this. Things at home seem to be working together for good. I find the Peace Democrats talking of sending commissioners to Richmond to talk of terms. The administration Speaker elected, all things seem easy, and the only way the peace men have been allowed any share of the spoils is by changing their names to 'Conservative War Democrats.' I don't know how there can be such a combination as conservative war Democrats: it is either peace or war, and no half-way stage of action. But politics does not mean reason, or sense, or justice, or equity, or law, but only *policy*.

"'Well, aunty, and what did you do on Monday?' Went for a ride. On Tuesday, we had a grand Bachelors' ball at the Braschi, to which your aunty went in canonicals, namely, white silk dress trimmed with black lace flounces. I had a hairdresser, and looked stunning. It was very brilliant. Your aunty was a very merry bachelor. On Wednesday, a whist-

party at Palazzo Barberini. On Thursday, another ride on horseback. Last night, a grand ball at Lady Stafford's. To-day I have been making calls, and hunting up apartments for friends. . . . .

"Show me a man's intimates, and I will tell you what that man is, if I never saw him. There are some men who would rather reign in hell than serve in heaven; but gradually these men sink in the social scale, and their true value appears. I bless my mother for one element in my nature, or rather my grandmother, — *ambition*. I cannot endure the society of people who are beneath me in character or ability. I hate to have satellites of an inferior calibre."

In the spring of this year Miss Cushman made an excursion to Naples with a party of friends, for whom she assumed the rôles of guide, courier, and "general utility business" with her wonted kindly zeal and inborn capacity. From a letter written at Sorrento, under date, April 25, I select the following: —

"My last hurried letter from Naples on the 18th will have prepared you for my being found hereabouts; but do not be surprised if my letter is short and unsatisfactory. The shutting myself up to write when in Rome, and the being compelled to do so, to guard myself from interruption, has made me rather dependent upon solitude for ability to write at all. Therefore, when sitting in company with four other ladies, each of them occupied in different ways, some reading up about the local matters, which make Sorrento a pleasant resting-place, and occasionally thinking aloud the information thus gained, as, for instance, 'O, they have honey here!' another replies, 'Have they honey?' another sits cracking hempseed to feed a poor little quail, snatched from an untimely fate (in the shape of a boy) yesterday; another reads the last 'Atlantic Monthly,' and exclaims, 'How odd these Americans are! what strange galvanic stories they write!' another, who is busy writing herself, suddenly startles me

by saying, 'O, Miss Cushman, can you tell me where in Rome I can buy German paste for a canary-bird?'—knowing the sort of intense animal I am, and how easy it is to send me off bodily or mentally on any hest which is required, you can easily imagine how difficult it must be for me to think about what I am writing. It is perfectly heavenly weather,—the sky without a cloud; the sun shining upon the water at a distance (but not near, for you know the sun don't come upon Sorrento or its waters until midday), and now it is half past ten o'clock A. M., the sea as calm as it can be and not be 'smooth as glass'; Naples distinctly seen opposite to us; Vesuvius, in a gentlemanly mood (not smoking), over on our right hand; the little towns along the edge of the sea, with their bright white houses looking like pearls around the sapphire bay; the hum of voices rising from far down on the edge of the beach, under our windows, with an occasional snatch of 'Santa Lucia' or 'Carolina'; the air perfectly still, not too warm, nor with enough of spring in it to take out its little 'snap' of vigor. I do assure you it is perfectly delightful; and as if to help to make it more so to me, yesterday morning I received your letter of the 24th March, as well as more favorable news from my mother; so you see, dear, I have reason to see all the beauty about me in roseate colors. We are making the usual *giro:* leaving Naples on Wednesday, since which time we have been to Salerno and Pæstum; on Thursday, got to La Luna at Amalfi; on Friday, up the valley of St. Drago to Ravella and La Scala, to see the Saracenic remains, and down by the valley of the mills,—a *giro* which thoroughly did me up, reminding me that I am not so young as I was when I visited these places in 1853 and 1857, but still as receptive of the beauty around and before me as I was then."

On the 4th of March of this year (1865) Miss Cushman writes from Rome:—

"What a day this is at home! How grand Mr. Lincoln must feel, that by the sheer force of honesty, integrity, and

patience, he has overcome faction to such an extent, that he is to-day, by the *convictions* of the whole people, placed again in the Presidential chair to guide and protect their interests for four more years. The first election of a President may have come through popular clamor, through the passions and excitements of the moment being successfully played upon by popular orators; but the calm re-indorsement of faith in his judgment, reason, calmness, prudence, and goodness, after such a four years, is a spectacle sublime in the eyes of men and angels, at a juncture like the present, when the world looks on in curious wonder and doubt and distrust, at the struggle upon which depend republican institutions for all future time. God help him to keep true and faithful!"

Speaking of one of the children, she says:—

"We shall see if we cannot make a *clever* man of him, and then it will not matter much who was his aunt or grandmother, while his ancestry from the spring or fount may have been a prouder one than many can boast. The name Cushman comes originally from the *Cross-bearer*, — the man who was worthiest to carry the cross in the old crusading times, — and it is not an unworthy stem for a family tree. God knows it has been the lot of all my branch of that genealogical tree to bear crosses, but they have done it bravely, and always with an upward and onward motto and tendency."

Part of the summer of this year Miss Cushman spent at Harrowgate, having been ordered to use the mineral waters of that place. She speaks of her stay there in a letter to Miss Seward.

"You will be glad to hear that my stay at Harrowgate has been of great good to me; I am better and stronger and more able to bear the strain of the winter upon me. For, seeming so strong as I do, it would appear strange that any social tax could weary me so much as does the gayety of a Roman winter. I have so much society, so many people who come

to me with letters of introduction, so much to do in the way of visiting and receiving of visits, — which are the moths of life, I think, — and then my correspondence has been so large, that I am literally worn out. Harrowgate is the highest table-land upon which you can live in England, and is, as I think I told you, the 'Sharon' of this country. This is my second summer here, and I am deriving much benefit from my stay. We are staying in a large, old-fashioned country inn, situated at the end of a very long and wide green common called the 'Stray.' Our sitting-room opens by a few steps on to the lawn, where we have lovely flowers, pretty, comfortable garden-seats, sunshine pouring in upon us (and you must be informed how rare the sunshine is in England, to appreciate the blessing); all the airs of heaven unchecked blow upon us, and bring us healing, balm, strength, and new hope. Everybody walks briskly here; even the dogs feel the magnetic virtue of the atmosphere, and carry their tails at a particularly stiff angle, trotting about with an air of importance, as if they had much to do in the world. Here we shall remain until the 16th, when we hope to go to a very lovely country called the 'Valley of the Wharfe,' where are the ruins of Bolton Abbey, the most beautiful in England. Towards the 22d we get to London, to make ready for our journey to Rome, which we hope to reach by the 22d of October, not a day later.

"I have done very little reading this summer. I am glad you like Jean Ingelow. She is a charming writer; fresh, vigorous, pure, and good. I wanted to ask you if you had ever read Browning's 'Saul'; it is so very fine, full of grandeur and meaning. You say so truly that we read and read, and study meanings in a poet, and fail to comprehend all he intends; and then a day comes, when through suffering, or trial, or mental growth of which we have not been aware at the time, the meaning of the poet shines upon us clear as light, and we marvel that we never understood before. I find this so constantly, that I cease to marvel at it any more; only wait patiently for the revelation.

correspondence with her during the anxious years of the war was a source of comfort and strength to her, and through her to many others. *His* letters were by her own special direction burned after her death.

It was not long after this that the fearful news of Mr. Lincoln's death and the attack upon Mr. Seward flashed like a thunderbolt upon the American colony at Rome, blacker and heavier from coming out of a comparatively clear sky. Miss Cushman's own words will best express the feeling of the time. Writing to Miss Seward, she says: —

"How my heart has ached for you and yours during these last terrible three days! In our dreadful uncertainty as to the safety of those so dear to us both, I am weak and powerless to express what I feel. I only want to send you this one line to let you know how I sympathize with you in your sufferings for those you love; *you* could know and feel this by your own heart; but you must let it speak to *them* all that I could offer of condolence, sympathy, respect, and affection. I hardly know what to say to you, for it is now a fortnight since this terrible, awful act, and how it may have fared with you all it is difficult to conjecture. The last we have of news says, 'Mr. Seward is considered out of danger, but Mr. Frederick Seward is in grave peril!' We look so feverishly and anxiously for the news of the 19th, which we hope to have to-morrow. Never has excitement and anxiety reached such a point. All the Americans here, meet, look at each other, and burst into tears. A meeting was held at the Legation yesterday, and resolutions adopted which reflect credit upon all who joined in them. This afternoon we are to have a funeral ceremony or service performed at the Legation for Mr. Lincoln, true friend, patriot, martyr; all the Americans have gone into mourning. The government has ordered the flags draped in mourning for three days; never was there such a general feeling of horror, or such universal expression of respect. Your father's life is prayed for as never

man's was before. One and all, friend and foe, feel how more than necessary is his life to his country; and for me, I can only say I have *never* felt such a sense of sorrow, such a fear of bereavement and desolation, as I feel now through my fears for him. If he is able to hear it, convey to him through your loving words what I would say but cannot; and if he cannot hear it (and what misery there is in that thought!) you will convey it to your poor dear mother instead. God bless you and help you, prays your attached

"CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN."

The natural results of all the pain and horror of this time followed in the death of Mrs. Seward, and soon thereafter that of her daughter, Miss Fanny Seward.

Miss Cushman writes of this last sad event to Mr. Seward:—

"How can I ever tell you of the sadness which filled my soul at the intelligence which reached me on my return to Rome last Saturday night. No words can express what I feel for you all, how truly my heart goes out to you in your great sorrow and bereavement, and how deeply with that sorrow for you is mingled a grief for my own loss, which I find it so difficult to realize. I ask myself every hour, 'Can it be possible that my sweet young friend has passed away, and shall I never see her more?' This is hard to believe. I have heard from her so constantly this summer, that I have known of her failing health; but her last letter brought me so much better tidings that I was comforted much, and therefore the suddenness of the announcement shocked me more than words can tell. Alas! poor, dear child! how short has been her separation from the mother she adored, and what terrible sacrifices have you, my noble and sorely tried friend, been called upon to lay on the altar of your country! How more than hard has been your way! how terrible your pain! how little your seeming reward! but

'He who ascends to mountain-tops shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapped in clouds and snow.
He who surpasses and subdues mankind

Must look down on the hate of those below;
Though high above the sun of glory glow,
And far beneath, the earth and ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head;
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.'

My heart bleeds and aches for you as each successive blow falls upon you. I find myself awe-stricken, wondering how it can be possible that you should endure still more and live! You have had to bear so much in every way, that it seems to me you must be more than mortal if you are not broken in pieces. I do not ask a word from yourself, for that would be too much to expect at such a time; but I should be so glad if A—— would find time and heart to tell me of you all, and if she can of *her* also. I should be glad of some particulars. About a month ago I received a letter from the dear child friend, in which she enclosed to me two sweet poems expressive of the sublimest trust in the tender love of God. Do you know them? One of them, 'God Knows Best,' seemed to me so full of saintly thought, as well as the most beautiful faith and hope! She was fitted for her translation, dear friend, and this must be some consolation when you grieve that you have been compelled to yield her up, a pure, true sacrifice, worthy of the place to which she has been called. Her last letter was a very long one, written in the midst of those she most loved in the world, in the little library at Washington. She described the scene to me, — what you were each and all doing, and her feelings with regard to each and all. Her tender love and reverence for you, and your sufferings during the last year and a half, had permitted her to watch over *you* as you had ever so tenderly watched over her, and had seemed to change your relations toward each other, making *her* life larger and richer and happier. It would almost seem as if I ought to send you this letter; it is always sweet to know *how* one is loved; and you shall have this letter if you wish, though it is sadly precious to me, as the last I can ever have from her loving hand.

"I know it is hard, but I shall be so glad of a word from among you that I venture to ask it, trusting to the goodness and kindness you have always shown me. I regret more than ever that I am unable, through illness, to get to America this summer; it would have been a great joy to me then, and a great consolation to me *now*. But it was not to be. Ah, my friend, truly God's ways are not as our ways! That he may bless and comfort you, prays ever

"Your faithfully loving friend,

"CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN."

In May of 1866 Miss Cushman was summoned to England to her mother's death-bed. At that time all Italy was in excitement with the movement of troops, and regular travel was for a time much impeded. She met with many delays on the road, and had the unspeakable pain of meeting in Paris the sad intelligence that she was too late. Mrs. Cushman died on the 7th of May, and she only arrived in time to follow her remains to the grave. This loss cast a heavy shadow over her life, and she lost after it much of her hopeful buoyancy of temperament, health began to fail, and she sought change and relief in movement.

From a letter of this period I extract the following. It refers to certain troubles and states of feeling which had caused her deep anxiety and much heart-burning. The reflections are valuable, as showing how our poor earthly trials and resentments fade away and come to nothingness before the awful presence of death:—

"I feel," she says, "in being here we are doing more to help the poor dear spirit to its final rest than by all the masses that could be said or sung by priest or pope. You, who know our inmost hearts, will judge us fairly in this act. We know that we are doing what would have brought comfort to her poor dear tired heart while living, but what in the pride of

our tempers we could not render until we laid her in the earth by the side of the child she so loved, and for seven long, weary, troubled years longed to rest beside. God forgive us, and make us see in this how poor are all earthly resentments, how unworthy of our high calling as ministers each to *do* his work and not our own separate individual vengeances! I don't know, but it seems to me now as though all other troubles that can come to me will be more easily dealt with than they have ever been before. We shall see. The future must judge us, and we can only 'watch and pray.'"

It was during the winter of 1867, in Rome, that Miss Cushman, in her effort to help a deserving and suffering artist, conceived the idea of presenting to the Boston Music Hall the masterly *alti-rilievi* which now adorn its walls. It was her hope that, after seeing these productions, a subscription might be raised in Boston to put them into a more durable material than plaster; and with this view she entered into correspondence with Dr. Upham, the President of the Association. It was not found practicable at that time, however, to raise the money for this purpose, and the reliefs were inserted as they came.

The Association, however, ordered from the artist two other brackets in the same style, sustaining busts of Gluck and Mendelssohn, which were also placed in the walls of the Music Hall, making a series of admirable and appropriate ornaments. The Association did not entirely abandon the idea of being able to have these works executed in marble, and Miss Cushman proposed, whenever any effort of the kind should be made, to give the fund the benefit of a performance for that purpose.

This good intention was never called for, and the brackets remain as they came, "things of beauty and joys forever" (though in a very perishable material), or at least as long as Music Hall shall be spared the fate which it is said awaits upon such structures sooner or later.

The original gift comprised, as we have said, busts of three great musical composers, upheld by brackets, ornamented with allegorical figures, suggesting the distinctive genius, style, and place in musical history of each. The heads are modelled in heroic, or more than life, size. The brackets are some five feet long by three feet wide. The figures stand out in full *alto-rilievo*. They are the works of a Danish sculptor, a fellow-worker of Thorwaldsen, Wilhelm Mathieu by name, who, though he has created real works of genius, lived there poor and old, and comparatively unknown. Several years ago he designed and executed for the Grand Duchess Helena of Russia busts of three great musical composers. These are the works which Miss Cushman, captivated by their beauty, has presented to Music Hall.

"The first bust is that of Palestrina, a very noble head, high, symmetrical, and broad, with features regular and finely cut, giving the impression of rare purity and truth of character, fine intellectuality, the calm dignity of a soul well centred, a beautiful harmony of strength and delicacy.

"As Palestrina was the great reformer of church music, the master in whom pure religious vocal music first attained to perfect art, there stands forth from the centre of the bracket a figure representing the genius of Harmony, as it is called by the artist, or say St. Cecilia, holding an open music-book of large wide pages, between two angels, who are placed a little higher in the background: one of them with folded hands, and lost in devotion, reads over her shoulder from the book; the other, pointing to the notes, appears to ask her whence the music came, and the genius, whose eyes are upturned, indicates that it is given by inspiration from above. The three forms and faces are instinct with a divine beauty; the central figure is one of unconscious dignity and grace, and is the loftiest idea of pure womanhood. Above and behind

this group, for the immediate support of the shelf which holds the bust, there is a choir of little cherubs, with sweet faces, nestling eagerly together, and with little arms encircling each other's necks, who are singing over the shoulders of Cecilia, and seem to be trying the new heavenly music. It needs no argument to show the fitness of the allegory; it speaks for itself.

"The next bust is Mozart's, type of all that is graceful and spontaneous in music, and of perpetual youth; the purest type of *genius* perhaps that ever yet appeared in any art, or in literature, if we except Shakespeare. Not that there has been no other composer so great, but that there has been none whose whole invention and processes have been so purely those of genius. Learned and laborious though he was, yet he created music as naturally as he breathed; music was his very atmosphere and native language. The busts and portraits which we see of Mozart differ widely, almost irreconcilably. This one adheres mainly to the portrait from life of Tischbein, with aid from several sculptures. Of all the busts we have seen, it seems the worthiest to pass for Mozart. It has the genial, beaming, youthful face, with nothing small or weak in any feature, — the full eyes, square eyebrows, broad, large, thoughtful forehead; the full, compact head; the long nose withal. Altogether it is very winning.

"Mozart was the complete musician; his genius did not wholly run in one direction. Like the other greatest modern masters, he was master in all kinds, in symphony as well as in song. But wherein he lives pre-eminent is in the lyric or dramatic union of orchestra and human voices, best shown in his operas, but shown also in his sacred compositions. Accordingly, to symbolize at once the most graceful minister that music ever had, as well as his peculiarly lyrical province, the artist has given for a central support to the bust the trunk of the German oak, about which, under its umbrageous canopy, circle the three Graces, with flying feet and flowing skirts, linked hand in hand, sisterly, in mutual guidance;

though in truth the middle one guides the other two, for cause which shall appear.

"In these three Graces he has represented the three characters of music, — the joyous, the sacred, and the tragic. The foremost in the dance, with full, open face and breast, all sunshine and delight, with the right arm thrown up, and holding a bunch of grapes over her head, is joyous in the sweetest sense; her other hand is gently detained by her religious sister, — the unspeakably lovely one between us and the oak, whose shoulders thrown back, and intent head in half profile, slightly bent in serious blissful meditation, remind us not a little of Jenny Lind, save that in beauty it exceeds her as far as she exceeded herself when she rose in song. Her left arm sustains, and seems to lead forward, her drooping sister Tragedy, whose head, deeply bent, looks off and downwards to the left, and takes the shadow of the picture, while the left arm is gracefully thrown up to balance the raised right arm of the joyous one. At their feet the masks of Tragedy and Comedy lean against the tree, grouping with the pineapple of a thyrsus stick. The whole group is exquisite — so rhythmical, so fluid, free, exhaustless in its movement, that it becomes fugue and music to the eyes, drapery and all accessories in perfect keeping. Around the top of the oak stem is carved the word 'Requiem,' the last unfinished work and aspiration of the composer, below which a wreath of laurel rests upon the oak leaves. The Mozart seems to us the happiest conception of the three. This one design should be enough to make its author famous.

"Beethoven is the subject of the third bust, which also is extremely interesting; and yet to many it will prove the least satisfactory of the three. Indeed, Beethoven is far more difficult to symbolize in art than either of the others. The head is modelled mainly from a good bust made in Vienna, and is doubtless far more true to actual life, if not a stronger head, than Crawford's noble but only ideally true statue. Whether a better bust of Beethoven exists we know not; but certainly none so good has found its way before to America.

"But how to symbolize the genius of Beethoven, — one so many-sided, so profound, struggling with untoward fate, yet full of secret hope and joy beyond the cloud, of glorious aspiration for the human race, — one born into the new era with the hope of universal liberty and sanctity and brotherhood? It is easy to think of his power, and how he wields the thunderbolts and smites in the climax of his harmonies, and how Jove-like and all-conquering he is. The Germans sometimes call him the 'Thunderer'; and so our artist has chosen, for support of the bust, Jupiter Tonans himself, sitting throned upon his eagle, which clutches the thunderbolts in its talons and soars through immensity. Above the god's shoulders appear two winged genii holding up the bracket. There is a fine truth to the glorious uplifting sense his music gives us in the idea of being borne aloft by Jove's strong eagle.

"But the sweetness, the tenderness, the frolic fancy, are quite as characteristic as the strength and kingliness of Beethoven; and our artist has made the Thunderer relax his gravity and listen with inclined, smiling face to a little urchin of a Cupid, seated on the eagle's wing, who, with upraised looks and hands, is telling merry stories to the god of gods, clearly in allusion to the humorous passages — the *scherzos* — in Beethoven's music. The thought is a happy one."*

In September of 1867 Miss Cushman writes from Bude, a little fishing-village on the picturesque coast of Cornwall: —

* I find this worthy description of these interesting sculptures in the Atlantic Monthly for March, 1868, and have thought it well to insert it here, not only for its own sake, but by way of calling public attention once more to them, and to the fact that they are now so placed in Music Hall that they are *never really seen*, and to express the wish of many admirers, that they might now be transferred to the Museum of Art, and placed in a position to be seen and appreciated, where they would be a monument to Miss Cushman's *taste* as well as to that generous quality of heart which prompted her desire to further and bring out the manifestation of other artists' genius. I have recalled them and their presentation

"I do so wish you could have been here with me; such a quaint, simple, primitive place, with a lovely beach for bathing, nestled amid cathedral-like rocks, and no Mrs. Grundy to see or care for, so you can wear what you choose; food excellent, and cheapness amazing. In its general aspect, Bude is not unlike Newport; the cliffs are something like, but finer and grander, and the downs much more extensive. There is a little breakwater to keep off the encroachments of the Atlantic waves, which roll in here miles in extent, a splendid sight. We, with three dear friends of ours, go down and sit for hours among the rocks and watch the waves coming, dashing, and booming up against them, and thrown back again, in a wilderness of milky foam, which beats again and again upon the rocks until it is caught up by the wind and blown about like great white sea-birds. One day we saw Macdonald, who is living in a cottage here with hosts of children, cross over the breakwater when the tide was just beginning to creep over it. He carried one baby in his arms, led another by the hand, and a third toddler held on by the second. We watched this procession breathlessly, as you may imagine. They arrived safely at the other end, where the breakwater ends in a high mass of rock upon which are some buildings. Now the question arose whether they would attempt the return, for every moment the tide washed heavier over and between the huge stones of the breakwater; presently, back they came, almost blinded by the spray and foam, but full of courage and

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to the hall as a fine example of Miss Cushman's *manner* of doing things of this kind, not merely giving help to a deserving artist, which is easy where mere money is concerned, but giving it in a way which, beside helping his material needs, supplied that still more important aliment for which he was suffering, namely, appreciation and encouragement in his art. Add to this the æsthetic value of these gifts as well as their value to the country in their beautiful and varied suggestiveness, and it will be seen how far-reaching and complete were Miss Cushman's ways of dealing in such matters, and what capacity and energy she brought to bear upon them, taking untold trouble in the way of correspondence, management, etc., of which those who enjoy the results very little dream.

pluck, not one of them shrinking or betraying the least sign of fear. The baby crowed aloud with delight. Macdonald came to speak to me afterward, and made very light of the adventure. "It does them good," he said; "they like it." I am so much better and stronger for this wild, unceremonious life among the rocks and deep-sea caves. We have our dinner sent down to the shore, and eat it with good appetite and plenty of sea-salt. Then we sit and read or sleep, propped against rocks, and full of content until the spirit stirs us to movement, and then we clamber about and explore and find no end of curious things. The tide falls here so many feet that the caves are full of deep-sea curiosities left in the pools and shallows."

CHAPTER X.

DRAMATIC READINGS.

"The purpose of playing
Is to show virtue her own feature,
Scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time
His form and pressure."

Hamlet.

IT was not until the last six years of her life that Miss Cushman fully developed her unequalled ability as a dramatic reader. She had given occasional public readings before that time. She was always ready to amuse and delight the social circle, and she rarely refused to lend her powerful aid in that way to any worthy object of charity; but it was not until these later years, when, by the advice of physicians and the counsels of her own strong heart, she sought refuge from herself in her art and nobly struggled against the lowering influences of a fatal malady in the exercise of her great gifts, that she came to what was undoubtedly the highest culmination of her genius.

In this effort, which was persistently and thoroughly pursued through trials of strength and patient endurance unparalleled, she did forget herself, and rose always nobly and unflinchingly to the heights of her possibility, and to the entire satisfaction of her hearers, little dreaming, while so rapt and delighted, how much of pain and suf-

fering was held in abeyance, if not absolutely conquered, in the effort. All Miss Cushman's nearest friends were anxious and troubled when she came to this resolution to continue working. It was difficult for any one to believe how completely spirit could conquer matter in her nature, and to those who watched this struggle during these latter years; it was not strange that they never could fully realize the possibility of surrender in the end. She was heroic in her suffering, as in all things else. She it was who sustained others; she held them up in her strong arms and comforted them, instead of leaning heavily upon them. In her sick-room she was still as much a queen as when, in the rôle of Katharine, she drew the faithful picture of a noble and saintly death-bed.

It was in this play, "King Henry VIII.," at Providence, that she made her first essay as a reader, after her resolution was taken. She read only the play; she had not then added to her *répertoire* the innumerable subjects with which she afterwards diversified her programmes. On this occasion she was a little nervous, and friends among the audience not less so. But the moment she made her appearance on the platform they felt that all fears for her were superfluous; for *her* there was "no such word as *fail*."

The surpassing power of concentrativeness, which may be said to have been the keystone to the arch in her character, brought her at once, full, rounded, and complete, to the perfect possession of herself and the needs of the occasion. She seemed to cast off, with grand ease, every influence, every suggestion of any other life but the one she was for the time to interpret. She identified herself with it, and from the moment when, after her graceful, self-possessed entrance, she seated herself at her table, and, with one comprehensive glance which seemed

to gather in all her audience and hold them, as it were, by a spell peculiarly her own, — the spell of a potent and irresistible magnetism, — she set aside all feeling of personal identity, and lived, and moved, and acted the varied personages of the story as they each came upon the scene; and not only in voice and word, but in look and bearing, they lived before us, each one distinctly marked and individual, and never by any chance merging into the others, or losing its clearly marked character.

It hardly needed that she should ever repeat over the names of the *dramatis personæ*; they spoke for themselves, and came and went as vividly, and far more ably, than they are often seen upon the stage. It was well said by a friend, on one occasion, "I much prefer hearing Miss Cushman read to seeing her act, because in the readings she is so well supported." All the minor parts are given their full value and significance, and one receives a strong impression of what the drama might be if this completeness were more persistently aimed at. Often these small parts in able hands assume an unexpected importance, are, indeed, like certain shifting tints or fitful lights in a picture, important adjuncts to the general effect, and meant to be such by the artist or dramatist; connecting links, as it were, whereby the passion or emotion is subdued or heightened; points of repose upon which the mind can rest for a moment, contrasting or enhancing the situation. Shakespeare is full of such artistic contrasts, and Miss Cushman felt and used them with her wonted dramatic instinct. In "Macbeth," for example, she always read a scene, seldom or never acted, where a drunken porter holds the stage for a time with a kind of maudlin soliloquy, between the dumb horror of the midnight murder and the awful tumult of its discovery. This bit of humor on the

very verge of hell is a kind of artistic necessity, and carries out an artistic law; and the ignorance and indifference to all such delicate shades in the ordinary conduct of the theatre shows how very large a margin for progress exists there.

To return to the reading of Queen Katharine. From the moment of her entrance all anxiety ceased. It was completely successful, and hardly needed that she should ask, when it was over, with the eager simplicity which was a part of her nature, "Well, were you satisfied?" and to flush with gratification at the response, "Soul-satisfied." This appreciation from those she loved was even more necessary to her than the larger verdict of the public; though to her quick spirit that was very needful. She was always working hard for it, and could never be satisfied unless it came. Sometimes it seemed as if she might surpass the bounds of the highest endeavor in her effort to secure this; that it might be a temptation to her to overdo. Her first and instinctive creation was always her best. But of what art may not this be said? Human effort must be more or less imperfect. In a bright, creative moment comes *a flash*, as it were, of influence from some God-given source; the hand, the pen, the tool, works with power, something far beyond our ordinary efforts, — it may be crude, incomplete; the common eye cannot see its value; we ourselves hope from it still unutterable things; but there is in it something not to be improved upon; all the care and work and study in the world will not add to that intangible something; labor only weakens it, what is called finish only disguises it, it is lost in the handling, it is spiritual and immortal. This it is which makes the rough sketches of great masters so valuable and important. The very highest culture covets them, the most precious fruition of the world culminates in these

sparks from an immortal source. It is the only way that we can explain what is called the inequality of genius; no human creature can be always up to the height of the best that is in them, and they do not always know their best. The love of the world for outside glitter or polish, the feverish craving for excitement, the demand for the sensational and extreme, has ruined many an artist and spoiled many a work of true genius. If Miss Cushman yielded to such influences at all, — and it requires the strongest kind of a nature to resist them, — it was in a very modified degree; her nature was too thorough and too instinctive to err much on the wrong side, if at all.

The Shakespearian Readings were of course her highest manifestation in this branch of her art. Such a combination of fine presence, noble voice, perfect delivery, and admirable elocution has seldom been brought to bear upon the matchless productions of Shakespeare; but she possessed beside a large and varied *répertoire* of choice reading, in which her ability found unlimited range, and left her without a rival. Earnestness, intensity, here as ever, were the chief characteristics of her style; but there was never wanting in its proper place, tenderness, delicacy, pathos; while humor, from its subtlest to its broadest shades, has probably never found an abler interpreter.

Of her Shakespearian Readings, "Macbeth" must take the first place, but Queen Katharine was her favorite part. She was greatly in sympathy with the noble, pious, and long-suffering queen, who, in a position of unmerited abasement, knew how to bear herself so royally; and she identified herself so completely with the character, that the tender inspiration of the last scene would be visible in her face and eyes long after she had left the stage. The part of Lady Macbeth, on the contrary, she disliked. The marked contrast between these two parts, which,

during the latter years of her life, when her range of acting parts became so limited, she was called upon so constantly to repeat, she often discussed with masterly analysis and depth of insight, — the good and the evil principles warring upon the field of life, the one triumphing through apparent failure, the other wrecked amid apparent success; the noble and saintly queen rising above all her woes in the divine panoply of virtue; the bloody and remorseless murderess overwhelmed and destroyed by the recoil of her own weapons upon herself, able to do the evil, but unable to bear its consequences.

She liked better to read "Macbeth" than to act it, because in the reading of the other parts she could find relief from the tension and strain she experienced in the realization of a character so opposed in all ways to her own. It may be said, it is especially the function of the dramatic art, and the crowning glory of an artist, to be able to embody all shades and varieties of character, whether in sympathy with them or not. This is undoubtedly true, and Miss Cushman never allowed her want of sympathy with a part to affect or weaken her interpretation of it; but we are speaking now, not merely of Miss Cushman as she appeared upon the stage, but trying to give a rounded and complete portrait of her in all her phases, both on and off the stage; and there was a side to her which was above and beyond the mere acting of a part, a side of her nature which made her far more than an actress; which enabled her to fill the rôle of a noble and thoughtful woman. She analyzed all her parts, and missed no shade of their true embodiment; but for her own supreme rôle, no study and no analysis was necessary, for God had cast her for the part.

It is well known that Miss Cushman on a few occasions acted the part of Hamlet, and it was a performance which

gave her intense pleasure. She alludes to it in some of her letters as the very highest effort she had ever made, and the most exhausting; of all her parts, this one seemed to fill out most completely the entire range of her powers. What has been said of Romeo in another part of this memoir applies equally to Hamlet. It is a part which cannot be well filled, except by a man too young to have achieved the necessary experience: a crude Hamlet is insufferable; an old Hamlet is equally incongruous; in this respect Miss Cushman satisfied the eye, in all others she gratified the mind. The matchless delivery of that immortal language, no word or sentence slurred over or "come tardy off," no delicate intricacies of thought left obscure, but all illuminated by a genius created for such interpretation, was alone a treat beyond comparison. Miss Cushman looked the part of Hamlet as well as she did that of Romeo. Her commanding and well-made figure appeared to advantage in the dress of the princely Dane, and her long experience in the assumption of male parts took from her appearance all sense of incongruity. In fact, her excellence in whatever she undertook to do disarmed criticism and satisfied the mind and the eye at once.

Her assumption of the part of Cardinal Wolsey was another exceptional triumph of the like kind. In a notice of the time I find it alluded to as "a magnificent piece of acting, which fairly carried away her audience; even for a man it is an arduous character, and we had doubts of the success which would attend it; but she knew her own powers, and commanded a great success. In the third act, in which the Cardinal falls from greatness, no actor or actress on the stage can equal her. She realized to our memory the palmy days of the drama, and made old play-goers recall the times of Cooke, Kean, and Macready." She spoke of it often, and criticised her own

performance as fully and freely as she would have done that of another person. The chief difficulty she found in it was the necessity for keeping up to, and above, in voice, bearing, and *impression*, the other male parts in the play, especially in the scene where the fallen Cardinal is *baited*, as it were, by the rude and triumphant nobles who rejoice in his discomfiture. In this scene great power is necessary to avoid being overborne by mere noise and violence, and falling below the moral level which the Cardinal must maintain to be even in ruin the "high Cardinal" whom Shakespeare drew. It may be fancied how easily a weak assumption of this part might at this point drop into the contemptible. Miss Cushman confessed that she held her own with difficulty; but that she did hold it, there can be no doubt. She looked the part well, and was in all points of dress and bearing admirable. Her reading of this part did not fall below her acted conception of it, and possessed the value of a higher interpretation through the more delicate and subtle rendering of the other characters.

Although Miss Cushman's special gifts, combined with her noble presence and fine voice, adapted her most for tragic parts, the lighter creations of comedy found in her an apt and capable interpreter. It will not be necessary to recall to the memories of this generation her early triumphs in such parts as Rosalind, Beatrice, Juliana, Lady Gay Spanker, etc. In the readings, her genuine and genial enjoyment of the minor humorous characters scattered all through Shakespeare's plays will be well remembered, as well as many other efforts in which the light and sparkling wit of comedy widened and deepened into the broadest and richest humor. There was something so infectious in her own enjoyment of the fun that she took her audience completely along with her; the wave

of sympathy gathered them all together into such a genial glow of enjoyment and self-forgetfulness, that conventionalities were forgotten, the hedges and barriers which fence human souls from one another were thrown down, and strangers exchanged smiles and comments, and all felt that some potent spell had evoked the friendliness from the depths of their hearts, and that they were in some new sense brethren in feeling and sympathy.

This power of creating an atmosphere of love and kindness about her, which she exercised so fully in her private relations, was thus found capable of attaining a wider scope and achieving a broader influence. She loved to evoke this kind of sympathy: she worked for it by an instinctive law of her nature, and never could be quite satisfied until she felt that it was effected; then how she glowed and basked in the reflection of her own sunshine from the faces about her, how she fed on the emotion she had herself elicited, and how by her own large true-heartedness she opened and widened and softened the hearts of others.

Those readings which formed the second part of her entertainments may be classed under the three heads, of emotional, heroic, and humorous, although she read to perfection anything purely lyrical, as, for example, the "Lady of Shalott," than which a purer, sweeter, more harmonious utterance never fell from mortal lips. Yet her great force undoubtedly lay in such compositions as possessed a narrative and dramatic interest; and as the needs of a mixed audience had always to be considered in her selections, probably no one ever before met so large and varied a demand as she did. After the tragedy, ought by all the laws of human nature to come the farce; and the comic selection became as indispensable as the Irish song after a Roman reception.

Among her emotional readings may be mentioned "The Young Gray Head," by Mrs. Southey; a touching narrative poem which always brought tears from her audience. Tennyson's "Grandmother" was another of this class; remarkable for the sustained manner in which she preserved the appearance, voice, and accent of an aged woman, who with the garrulity of extreme age goes over and over the scenes and impressions of her youth.

"Seventy years ago, Annie,
Seventy years ago."

In marked contrast with this, yet with much the same sustained evenness of declamation, whereby with masterly skill she subordinated her whole force to the weird and supernatural character of the poem, preserving its solemnity and yet losing none of its suppressed energy, I would recall the remarkable reading of "The Skeleton in Armor." It might be compared to a fine symphony of Beethoven, or the solemn funeral march of Chopin; it was more musical than dramatic, and full of the suggestiveness of *tone* as well as word, with the added force of impersonation; for, as usual, face and form became imbued with the personality of the warlike apparition.

"Then from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise."

By some power, known only to herself, she took on this supernatural aspect. The solemn lines fell from her lips like deep reverberations from some distant funeral bell, and yet with an undertone, a sort of suppressed martial clang, as if the spirit of the old Viking still warmed to the memory of his warlike exploits, and when the verse was reached where he tells his triumph over his pursuers, —

"And, as to catch the gale,
Round veered the flapping sail,

Death ! was the helmsman's hail,
Death without quarter !
Midships, with iron keel,
Struck we her ribs of steel,
Down her black hulk did reel
Through the black water ! "

a sense of horror seemed to pass all through the audience, making "the nerves thrill and the blood tingle." Of the same type, and treated in the same way, was Rossetti's strange ballad of "Sister Helen." Here also was felt this mastery over the nerve-centres of her listeners, the same instinctive grasp of all the subtleties of the poet's meaning, the same intense, sustained, and powerful working up, without apparent effort, to an artistic climax, of which not many were capable of realizing the full force until they felt it in their nerves and blood, and then they hardly knew what had so thrilled them.

Great as was Miss Cushman's rendering of this class of subjects, there was still another field where her genius shone with a more resplendent lustre and produced still more marked effects. This was in the rendering of the heroic ballads of Macaulay, Tennyson, and Browning. It would be difficult for any pen to do justice to this theme, still more one so inexperienced. In "The Battle of Ivry," for example, wherein seems concentrated in one blazing sheaf all the martial and religious fervor of the time, it would seem impossible to give the faintest idea of the impulse, the enthusiasm, the chivalric loyalty, the martial energy which Miss Cushman imparted to the lines,— the rush and hurry of the battle, the shifting tumult of the strife, the valor and clemency of Henry, and, through all and dominating all, the deep, fervid, passionate devotion to God and king.

"Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories are,
And glory to our sovereign liege, King Henry of Navarre."

All this is in the poem, but sleeping, as it were, until evoked by the master spell of an interpreting genius.

"The Charge of the Light Brigade," by Tennyson, and Browning's masterly poem, "How they brought the good News from Ghent to Aix," were brilliant examples of the same kind. Macaulay's noble poem of "Horatius" was a more varied and sustained effort, but full of the same fervid quality. In all these Miss Cushman found space and room for the exercise of her highest and strongest powers; but concentrated force, sustained energy, masterly elocution, though great factors in the general result, would have been as nothing, unless infused and welded together, as it were, by the earnest enthusiasm, the deep spiritual force of her nature, feeling and interpreting whatever of highest and noblest and best lay underneath the heroic lines; so in each and every manifestation of herself on the stage, on the platform, or in private life, she touched the heart; and this was the secret, if secret it may be called, of all her influence and of all her success. In one sense she was an interpreter of the thoughts of others; in another she was a creator, inasmuch as she made them live doubly and trebly in the minds of others, to whom, but for her, they might have been as sealed fountains.

One more of these heroic themes remains to be noted. In the quaint ballad of "Hervé Riel" Browning has not more skilfully told the story of a simple act of disinterested heroism than Miss Cushman has made it live and move and breathe before her audience. One saw the honest sailor so quietly and so simply acting his great part, so calmly and so bravely ignoring that he had done anything worthy of reward, so contentedly and gladly asking and receiving the poor guerdon of a holiday to be spent with his wife on shore:—

"'Since 't is ask and have, I may;
Since the others go ashore, —
Come! A good, whole holiday!
Leave to go and see my wife,
Whom I call the Belle Aurore!'
That he asked and that he got —
Nothing more."

Miss Cushman's readings of Browning were especially fine, and would have delighted that impetuous and subtle genius, could he have heard them. The ruggedness and roughness of the metre were lost sight of in her vigorous declamation, for she declaimed rather than recited them. All obscurities of diction and involutions of thought became unravelled as if by magic, and the full force of the poet's meaning flashed out with a new and intense light. She was very fond of reading Browning in private to chosen listeners, and she dearly loved Mrs. Browning's poetry. During her Roman days she delighted many with "Casa Guidi Windows" and afterwards, it will be remembered, she introduced parts of this beautiful poem into a reading called "Roman Pilgrims," wherein was embodied some of the poetical inspirations to which Rome and Italy had given birth.

Some of Miss Cushman's finest readings were of what are called "dialect poems," a department in which she was quite unrivalled. Who could ever forget, for example, her reading of "The Death of the Old Squire," a simple, homely, but terrible picture, or, rather, a *tableau vivant* over which shifts and changes the shadow of a fearful catastrophe. All of her readings were of the nature of pictures, full of the subtlest lights and shades and the most wonderful suggestiveness, presented with a vividness of local coloring which compelled the mind to a full realization of the scene which lived and moved before it.

Of none of these can this be said more truly than of

this "Death of the Old Squire," and in none did she feel herself more thoroughly at home. With what vigor and truth she painted in the rough, quaint language of the old servant, —

"The wild, mad kind of a night, as black as the bottomless pit";

the wind, the rain, —

"(Well, it *did* rain), dashing the window glass
And deluging on the roof, as the Devil were coming to pass";

The stable and its occupants, —

"Huddlin' in the harness-room, by a little scrap o' fire,"

striving to keep up their spirits

"A-practising for the choir";

while the old squire lay dying in the house, and the superstitions of their class and country fill them with a sense of hovering evil, and make every sound and movement ominous and terrible.

"We could not hear Death's foot pass by, but we knew that he was near;
And the chill rain, and the wind and cold, made us all shake wi' fear."

This picture was complete. Then follows another, in which the life of the old squire is lightly drawn from the huntsman's point of view, — a fair portrait of a fox-hunting squire of the period, rounded with a sort of rough tenderness, and touching upon those points in his character which would lead up naturally to the final catastrophe. Meanwhile there has come a lull in the storm, the wind has gone down, the rain ceases, —

"The moon was up quite glorious-like."

From this point the poem is one mad, wild rush to the conclusion. Suddenly, in the hush of midnight, the rusty turret-bell, which has not been heard for twenty years,

clangs and clashes out, and, as they all hurry forth, the dying master meets them face to face.

"His scarlet coat was on his back, and he looked like the old race."

In the delirium of fever he orders out his horse, summons his dogs. All obey him without question, for

"There was a devil in his eye that would not let us speak,"

and he rides away on his last hunt, followed by the amazed and horror-stricken servants. He rides to his death, and the old servant says, —

"We pulled up on Chalk Lynton Hill, and as we stood us there,
Two fields beyond we saw the ould squire fall stone dead from the mare;
Then she swept on and, in full cry, the hounds went out of sight.
A cloud came over the broad moon, and something dimmed our sight,
As Tom and I bore master home, both speaking under breath.
And that 's the way *I saw the ould squire ride boldly to his death.*"

This synopsis of the poem, which is an anonymous one, may give to those who never heard it read a faint glimpse of its capabilities as interpreted by Miss Cushman. In none of her readings was there a finer opportunity for her varied and versatile powers, in none such a masterly mingling of the natural and the terrible, of the simple and the sublime; the whole heightened, instead of injured, as is too often the case, by the use of dialect, which with her was so dealt with as only to add a new element of truthfulness and interest to the picture. This may be said also with reference to any dialect which she attempted. In her mouth it became natural and easy, and never made any impression of incongruity. In Burns's famous lines, for example, "A Man 's a Man for a' That," who would recognize it without its canny Scotch accent, or who would wish to hear it with that accent imperfectly rendered! The genuine, hearty enthusiasm with which

Miss Cushman felt and delivered this noble, manly utterance, was positively infectious, and carried her audience by storm. Every man was more a man who listened to it, and the better for that momentary lifting into a purer and better air. The wondrously varied intonation which she managed to impart to the refrain, "For a' that, and a' that," was not the least remarkable part of this remarkable performance.

To the humorous readings, which wound up these programmes and sent everybody away the better and lighter and happier for having been beguiled of a hearty laugh, the same or even fuller meed of praise is due. In this, as in all she did, she touched "the high top-gallant" of her powers; into this, even more than into the rest, she threw herself with that full completeness and self-abandon which was her great secret. Of this class of subjects I need only particularize a few: "Betsy and I are out," "Miss Maloney on the Chinese Question," "The Annuity," and "The Bapteesement o' the Bairn," though the two latter might perhaps come more appropriately under the head of "Dialect Poems." Of these, "Betsy and I are out" was a peculiar favorite. From the moment she begins slowly to draw off her gloves, and take the action and attitude of the honest, tender-hearted, obstinate old farmer, she seems to have a realizing sense of how such a man would act and speak and look under the circumstances. She creates the lawyer sitting opposite. She makes every one feel how they acted upon one another. She projects the absent Betsy upon the field of our consciousness. We know and see them all far more truly and really, because more subtly, than if they lived before us. This seems a paradox, and yet it touches a high truth. Her conceptions were beyond reality, because they were idealizations, which is the highest reality. There was

much more in this ballad in her hands than its writer ever conceived of, as he himself acknowledged when he came to see her on one of her Western journeys, and thanked her for all she had done for him in her reading of his lines. The same occurred with the authoress of "Miss Maloney on the Chinese Question." Mrs. Dodge said, "Miss Cushman, I never dreamed what was in it, until I heard you read it." And Miss Woolson, the writer of "Kentucky Belle," which was one of Miss Cushman's most effective readings, wrote to her to the same effect from the South:—

"Last spring, while at St. Augustine, I received from New York the programme of your *Reading* at the Academy of Music, and was equally surprised and pleased to find among the announcements 'Kentucky Belle.' Ever since, I have wished to thank you for the honor, to tell you how much real pleasure it gave me.

"It was little to you, Miss Cushman, but a great deal to me, and I thank you. It is not quite four years since I began to write, and in that time nothing connected with the work has given me so much pleasure as this."

She had, beside, many choice bits, not suitable in length or scope for the platform, but reserved for a happy moment to enliven the social circle. Many of these she kept in her pocket, and would produce on occasion, with a gleeful twinkle in her eye which she soon transferred to those of her listeners. She was indeed largely in sympathy with *joy*, and whatever led to it, and she fairly revelled in the effects she produced, when she opened this special door to her hearers' hearts, and saw and felt her influence in their brightening faces. She may be said to have been an opener of many doors into the innermost of human nature, bringing forth tears and smiles at her pleasure, and weaving a spell which for the moment

at least brought all hearts to a higher level and touched them as with fire from the altar of her own fervid spirit. Besides the readings which came under these various heads, were many miscellaneous and some religious ones. These last she delivered with grand simplicity and fervor; and it was her intention, had her life been spared, to make of them a special feature in her programmes. I find in one of her letters an allusion to a poem of this class, which she read sometimes in private, and the effect of it was much like her singing of sacred compositions.

"O, if you knew," she writes, "what pleasure I have had in reading aloud 'The Celestial Country,' that grand old poem of Bernard de Cluny, which is translated from the Latin, and is in that book you sent me at Christmas! It performed as much work in its time as Luther's Reformation, only the one was silent and the other outward. It is like a bell, which rings and clangs and calls and cheers! I never read anything like it."

In all the range of her readings, a noble simplicity and directness of method, the absence of the faintest shadow of affectation, and an artistic completeness of conception and execution beyond praise, place these performances on the highest level of contemporary art; but above and beyond all this there is a still greater excellence, a still higher spiritual significance. An old friend has well said of her in certain reminiscences of her early life, "the feet, never in fear or shame afraid to follow the dictate of the heart"; so in her later years, not the feet only, but the whole nature, went forth rich and strong in all its varied manifestations, but always more earnestly, more truly, more grandly, in the direction of the best and highest.

CHAPTER XI.

LAST FIVE YEARS.

"He 's truly valiant that can truly suffer."
Timon of Athens.

"Nothing in his life became him like the leaving of it."
Macbeth.

IT was in the spring of 1869 that Miss Cushman's malady first made its appearance. It seemed trifling, and upon consultation with the best physicians of Rome she was advised to go to certain German baths, which were said to be of great efficacy in such disorders. Fearing delay, however, she determined to go to Paris for further advice. There she was earnestly recommended by Dr. Sims to do nothing, to live well, take care of her general health, amuse herself, and forget the trouble if possible. It is to be deeply regretted that this excellent advice could not have been followed; but it was impossible for her to sit still under the thought that she might be helped by quicker means to an entire relief, and her remembrance that it was an inheritance in her family would not permit her to treat it lightly. Her resource was always in action. She went over to England and consulted Sir James Paget, then the highest name in the profession. His opinion was decidedly in favor of "heroic treatment." She, however, determined to make one more effort to avoid this necessity, and went

for a time to Malvern, where in connection with water-treatment she tried certain remedies which had been suggested to her, with a view of dispersing the tumor. This, however, proved useless, and on the 18th of August she went to Edinburgh, to place herself under the care of Sir James Simpson, whom she knew well, and for whom she had a great esteem. He, in connection with Dr. Spence, the head of the Royal College of Surgeons, decided upon an operation, and this sad and painful event took place on the 26th.

It was apparently very successful, but was speedily followed by a series of very dangerous complications, and for a time Miss Cushman seemed to hover between life and death. Finally, however, her good constitution and careful nursing brought her round; she rallied, and it was supposed and believed that the danger was effectually removed.

Toward the end of October she was sufficiently restored to be enabled to leave Edinburgh, and after a short stay at Malvern, for general restorative treatment, to start again for Rome on the 23d of November; but she was weakened generally by the long and serious illness, and in the course of the winter it became evident that the evil was not entirely eradicated.

In the spring of 1870 the trouble again made its appearance. She left Rome on May 23d, going by way of Venice and Munich to Paris, and from thence to England, where she again consulted Paget, and with some difficulty got his consent to further efforts for relief by another process of "heroic treatment," severer and more painful than the first, but less dangerous, namely, excision by caustic. This terrible process she underwent with her usual firm courage at Hampstead, at the house of dear and valued friends, during the month of June. For a

time this also was supposed to be successful; healing took place rapidly, her general health improved, and all seemed going on well. She went again to Malvern; but "the snake was only scotched, not killed," and the return of unfavorable symptoms induced her to make up her mind to return finally to America.

On the 22d of October, 1870, Miss Cushman sailed from Liverpool in the Scotia, on her last voyage to America. The Roman home was abandoned to the tender mercies of tenants. All knew, though no one ever said so, that they might never see it again. It was not until 1874 that it was finally broken up, and all its artistic contents transported to this country. These were so many and various, that it has only been since her death they have all been opened and distributed, and this only through a large addition having been made to the Villa, which before this could not contain them all. The Villa is now a most interesting and valuable record of her career, full of associations and remembrances, and held sacredly and reverently as such in the hearts of its present possessors. It is her real monument, which she herself created and adorned, where she yet speaks the noble lessons of her life through the subtle spiritual essence which breathes from every object she knew and loved. It is as sadly full of her now as it was when her sweet presence filled it with light and joy, and the potent force of her great personality pervades every material object with a strength which only such living presence as hers could leave behind.

The monument in contemplation at Mount Auburn, which only unavoidable circumstances have delayed, will be but an expression to the world at large of a great soul departed; but to the hearts of those who knew her in the genial and loving atmosphere of her home, the Villa must be her best monument.

She came home to America to make a last struggle for her life, and, failing that hope, to make what remained of it as useful and valuable to herself and others as lay within the bounds of her possibilities. It has been already shown how thoroughly she carried out this determination. The progress of her fatal malady, though sure, was slow. She had an originally powerful constitution and a most indomitable courage to fall back upon, and these sustained her almost to the last moment. The mere record of what she accomplished during these last years would seem incredible, and did indeed lead many to the belief that no serious ailment could exist. In spite of themselves, it also buoyed up the hopes of those surrounding her; it almost seemed as if a miracle might be wrought in favor of one who knew how to hold and use life with such power, who seemed as it were to defy the ordinary conditions of humanity. Very few who saw Miss Cushman act, or heard her read, during these years could at all realize her condition, she rose so entirely above and beyond it; and yet it was such that no medical authority would venture upon any hopeful auguries. To lengthen life as long as possible by careful living and judicious treatment was the utmost to be attained, and for a long time the disease seemed to be held in abeyance by these means. She always regretted that she gave up this generous system of treatment for hope of benefit from the water-cure, which was much urged upon her by friends, one of the first requisites of which is to lower the system. These matters are, however, beyond the scope of discussion here; in some respects she did derive benefit from the water-cure, and who can tell how much it may not have saved her of suffering? At any rate, with her usual firmness, having undertaken it, she gave it a fair trial. She was not one to surrender

so long as there remained even a faint hope of help; and for the sake of all who loved her she never remitted her efforts, and tried to cherish hope for herself, as well knowing how her despair would darken and depress their lives. So, as I have said, perhaps too often in this memoir, in this also she gave herself for others; she lived to the very utmost, that they might not despair; and it was a daily and hourly study, amid all that she had to contend with of pain and discouragement, to see and feel how truly she lived up to this thought, never, or rarely, descending into the inevitable depths which belong to our human nature, and from which not even the strongest can wholly escape. So powerful and so sustaining was this attitude on her part, that when she for a moment gave way, the world seemed to be coming to an end, to the faithful and devoted group who ministered to her; and when the sad moment of surrender at last came, it struck them all with the suddenness of a blow which had been slowly gathering force during six years of suspense, anxiety, and intense tension of soul and body.

The record of Miss Cushman's achievements during these last years is simply marvellous when we consider her rapid movements from place to place, the miles of railway travel she undertook, and the amount of work she performed under conditions so unfavorable. It was a grand, and yet a painful contemplation; for she threw herself into it with a steady and persistent purpose, knowing well that such an amount of overwork must wear out her forces sooner, yet content that the machine should wear rather than rust out, and finding in the exercise of her powers a satisfaction and content which seemed to more than repay her for the effort.

The autumn and winter of 1870 she passed in various places, trying what help might come from her native

air; up to the 11th of January she was at Hyde Park, on the Hudson, enjoying immensely the winter in the country, and taking long walks and drives, full of apparant strength and energy. She went also to Newport, with a view of trying that climate as a winter residence, having heard that it was milder than other places, and in many respects like the climate of England. It was after this visit she conceived the idea of building there; and she shortly entered into negotiations for the purchase of a site, and the erection of the home now so well known and so much admired. Her subsequent determination to work the better part of the year left it often tenantless; but she returned to it whenever she could, even for a time, with delight, and had much comfort and satisfaction in it, practising there, as everywhere, the pleasant duties of hospitality to its utmost capacity.

In one of her letters of this year, speaking of her state, she writes:—

"I am waiting; seeking all simple aids that can palliate my trouble; avoiding all things that can fatigue me; leading, for the most part and for the first time in my life, an *idle* existence. But I hope, with God's help, not a useless one for all that; for in trying to train myself to patience perhaps I am helping those who love me and suffer with me."

Shortly after, speaking of her Newport home, she says:—

"My house is pretty, and much admired; it is comfortable; but I am not going to test its merits this winter, for my doctor wishes me to work again, as he considers that change of scene, air, and occupation are desirable for me. I leave my home early in the autumn, to wander for a couple of months, not far away from it, and in the New England towns. Early in December I go to the West for a couple of months, and then perhaps to the South for a couple more, after which, if

all goes well with me, I may undertake the journey to California. You see I must be pretty well, or I should be unable to look forward with such a hopeful soul to such work and change as I do."

In pursuance of these projects, we find her busy in various places. On December 22d we have a pleasant letter from Brattleborough, Vermont.

"You will hold up your hands in wonder when you see where I am, and know of the cold, cold weather, — thermometer 10° below zero! I assure you I am amazed at myself; but while the weather in Boston was in a mild and serene state, they made application to me to come up here for a reading. I was stupid or sanguine (they both mean the same thing when one acts without calculation) enough to forget that Christmas of 1871 might be colder than Christmas of 1870, and made the engagement to come here on the 22d; and so, though my reading at Providence on Monday gave me a taste of Nova Zembla, and my journey of Tuesday to New Haven increased my knowledge of *possibilities*, which Wednesday night's experience at the Music Hall at New Haven ripened into shivering certainties, yet I was not prepared for yesterday's journey. Arrived earlier than I was expected by a day, for I had not had time to give warning; of course I had to come up in the village sleigh, a one-story house on runners, with the windows too high to see out of. I felt as if I was an exile on my way to Siberia, in the prisoner's van or 'black Maria.' I found my manager was an apothecary, and in the midst of a prescription when I drove up. He rushed out, covered with confusion as with a garment, making many apologies for not having been waiting for me. (How could he, when he did not know I would be so rash as to take one day for travelling and another for reading? Readers and lecturers are generally more economical of time and *means*.) He directed the driver what to do with me, and he landed us at the Park House, a summer house, where we are the only visitors! We are oppo-

site the Park, on what seems to be the main road out of the village, and opposite us, on the other side, also facing the Park, stands the 'Insane Asylum.' When they pointed out this building to me with some pride, I exclaimed, 'Ah, that is the house I ought to have been taken to.' The good simple people, not understanding the poor little 'bit of wit, picked out of a profane stage play,' turned and looked at me with a strange sort of inquiring wonder, that was perfectly refreshing after Boston and its realisms and realities! Well, the master of the house, after hearing what I wanted for supper, jumped into a sleigh and rushed (2.30) down to the village, and brought me back a steak worthy of Paris and Souchong tea worthy of London. We were very tired and parched and frozen, and by the time it was ready we were thawed out and able to thoroughly enjoy it. Then I was too tired for anything but bed; had forty blankets and a good fire; but in the night the fire went out, the blankets lost their power, and I did not dare to put my hand out of bed to pull up the other forty blankets which Sallie's provident care had piled up at the side of me. But morning came, and with it a woman whose activity and briskness made the blood jump in me, and I was warm before the fire was made. And now here I am, writing this to you in bed, where I have had my breakfast, and within three feet of a stove! You will want to hear something about my readings. When I tell you that E—— was in a state of 'wonder, love, and praise,' you will believe I read well. She said, 'You walked up on to the platform as if you had never done anything else in all your life, and had devoted your whole mind to it.' Sallie said, 'I expected nothing but to see you die at the end; it was so perfect.' *

"I leave here at 8.40 for Springfield; then to Albany; and from there to Hyde Park, for a rest. On the 3d January I get back to Boston, for readings on the 4th, 6th, and 8th."

It was not until September, 1871, that she made her

* This was the first reading at Providence, to which she is alluding.

first engagement to act at Booth's Theatre, New York. The newspaper notices of the time speak of this return to the stage in a tone of respect, almost of reverence, most unusual with the free lances of the press. All seemed to feel that it was that brightening up of the flame which precedes its final extinction.

The engagement was a highly successful one,* and was followed by another in Boston.† It was during this visit that the honor was paid her of naming the public school which had been erected on the site of her birthplace "The Cushman School," and a very interesting ceremony took place on the occasion, which will perhaps be best described in her own words. In a letter to a friend in England, dated December 31, 1871, she writes: —

"Your letter should have been acknowledged long ere this, but I have been the very busiest and hardest worked human being you *ever knew* for these last thirteen weeks. I do not remember even in my youngest days ever to have accomplished so much, for then I had only my profession, and no society

* The receipts for forty-two nights amounting to $57,000.

† A friend writes of this Boston engagement: "I can only tell you, what you no doubt hear from other quarters, that she is *perfectly splendid*, and seems to find only strength in the fatigues of her profession. It is hard to believe that there is anything wrong with her, seeing how she looks now, after all she has done lately. Last night, after two performances of Macbeth (afternoon and evening), I went behind the scenes to her dressing-room, on my way walking behind poor Macbeth, who had just come off from his dying scene, and a more dilapidated object it would be hard to find, — stumbling, tottering, and groaning, like a rheumatic old woman, while *she* I found almost as bright and cheery as if she had done nothing more than usual. But 'she is alone the queen of earthly queens.' M—— says she is Pope now, crowned with the triple crown of excellence in her three parts. All this, no doubt, the story of her great success in Boston, will be no news to you; but I am sure you can never hear too much of her good health and good condition."

duty to attend to as well. I have been hard at work, bodily, mentally, socially, and not, I hope, worthlessly. If you have seen any of the New York papers from about the 26th September and 17th October to 29th of the same, you would have seen that my country-people give me credit for growth in grace, and *believe* now firmly that they have a Siddons of their own! Of course it is not displeasing to me to be so considered, but *I know better*! I dare say I have grown intellectually, and my suffering has been sent to me in vain if I have not improved in spirit during all the time I have been away from my profession; but as a mere actress, I was as good, if not better, eleven years ago than I am now. But what is printed lives for us, and what is conceived and acted lives only in the *memory* of the beholder; thus I am glad that such things should be *printed* of me. I do not think it has hurt me physically to work. While the recognition has done my soul and spirit good, I feel that I have not labored in vain. Then, after New York, when I went to my native city, Boston, where they never believed in me so much as they did elsewhere, I came to have such praise as made my *heart* satisfied, and they indorsed their good opinions in a substantial way, which was also good. The City Council paid me a great honor in formally announcing to the world that one of their chief boasts, their public school system, should be associated with my name, by enacting that henceforth and forever the school building which had been erected on the site where stood the house in which I was born was to be known as the *Cushman School*. This from old Puritan stock, which believes that the public school is the throne of the state, was a greater honor than any I could have received from them. I was proud, first, that I as an actress had won it; then, secondly, that for the first time this had been bestowed upon a woman; and then came the civic pride, in knowing that my townspeople should care that I was ever born. Nothing in all my life has so pleased me as this."

The ceremonies were simple and impressive. The chil-

dren sang, and presented flowers. Speeches were made, to which Miss Cushman responded in her usual hearty manner, and from her usual text, — impressing upon her youthful hearers the value of earnestness of purpose, and the need to give themselves up to any work they had to do, whether of business or kindness, of sympathy or obedience." She then read to them "After Blenheim," by Southey, and other selections.

The following letter, by an eye-witness of the proceedings on this occasion, may not be uninteresting.

"In the old, historic part of Boston, close by the chime of bells given to the American colonists by King George, under the vigilant eye of the old cockerel, there stood, in 1816, a 'rough cast' house. Here, amid the summer heats, was born, of stern Puritan stock, a blue-eyed girl who afterwards, single-handed, fought her way to an eminence where she stood a queen, her royal right unchallenged! Boston proudly boasts that her day and generation had not Charlotte Cushman's equal. In 1867 the old house was torn down, and in its place was built a handsome brick school-house. For five years it had no name; then — happy thought! — a member of the school board proposed it should be called The 'Cushman School,' in honor of the celebrated actress. Some of the old conservatives were startled into a mild remonstrance. A public building named, forsooth, for a *woman!* What matter that it was a girls' school, and women only for teachers! Fortunately there was no mayor who must be flattered with an educational namesake; so the vote was carried, and to-day a woman's name is graven in letters of granite upon its façade. On the fifth day of January, 1872, Miss Cushman made a tour of the building, gracing each room with her presence. Then all were assembled in the hall for a dedicatory service. On the floor were seated the pupils, a thousand girls; on the platform, teachers and visitors; and in the centre, Miss Cushman. Here she made her 'maiden speech,'

as she smilingly said. Those upturned girlish faces were all the inspiration she needed, and a flush of enthusiasm gathered on her pale face. For their encouragement she told them she walked those very streets, a school-girl as poor as the poorest among them. With rapid gestures of her large, shapely hands, her eyes glowing with the fire of her own peculiar genius and her habitual intensity, she told them that whatever she had attained had been by giving *herself to her work*. A patience that tired not, an energy that faltered not, a persistence that knew no flagging, principles that swerved not, and the victory was hers, after long years of hard work. Higher than her intellectual strength, higher than her culture or genius or graces of character, she ranked her ability for *work*. This was the secret of her success, and the legacy she bequeathed the girls of the Cushman School. They knew something of her history; that she had educated herself; that she had stoutly resisted the shafts of disease; that the great men of the age delighted to do her honor; that she was an earnest, religious woman, upon whose fair name rested no shadow of suspicion. They felt the soft womanliness of her character shining out from the majesty of strength, and who can say how many impulses

'To dare and do and be'

were born there?

"Among the honored visitors who pressed round after the exercises were over was a slender, dark-eyed woman, principal of a well-known seminary about twenty miles from Boston, a woman whom hundreds have risen up and called blessed. She had been thrilled by Miss Cushman's words, and with an impulsive earnestness, so characteristic, said, as she was introduced: 'I wish you might live a hundred years and see the seed you have to-day planted spring up and ripen a hundred-fold.' The reply flashed back quick and strong, 'Madam, I wish I might, that I could do more and do it better!' As the two women, each eminent and successful in her chosen sphere, clasped hands and looked in each other's face one

brief minute, they recognized a fellowship of soul, a kinship of purpose.

"Goethe said, 'On some faces there is only a date, on others a history!' Much of conflict and victory was chiselled on Charlotte Cushman's face. None of us refuse 'Glory to God in the highest,' few but wish 'peace on earth,' but she had surely learned 'good will toward men'; and these three chords of that angelic choir, which nearly two thousand years ago sang 'o'er the blue hills of Galilee,' had turned the elements of her character into harmonious beauty."

Among many newspaper notices of this period (1871) I select a few, which, as expressing the universal opinion of the time, are worthy of preservation here. Her first appearance at Booth's, in Queen Katharine, is thus alluded to by the Tribune: —

"The enthusiastic reception which Miss Cushman received on Monday night must convince her how dear she is to the public, and with what profound regret her departure from the stage is viewed by all the lovers of dramatic art. Not to many women is it given to arouse our admiration; to fewer is it granted to gain our respect and gratitude. Miss Cushman can pronounce the sad word 'farewell,' with the honest and proud conviction that her name will live in the annals of the drama as one that was ever associated with all that is noble and pure. To her we owe a special debt of gratitude, in that she has ever been true to her art in spite of difficulty, *reproach*, and suffering."

Another notice alludes to her reception as full of respectful enthusiasm, tempered with regret: —

"She acted with remarkable strength and fire. That she would bring back to the stage her old earnestness and subtlety, her unique command of all the resources of her art, and her keen appreciation of the text, enriching even the spaces between the lines with wonderful suggestiveness of look and

gesture, we quite expected. But last night she did more. She threw into her performance a vigor and intensity not inferior, as we remember them, to those characteristics in her best days. Miss Cushman is beginning to feel the approach of age, and physically, perhaps, she is not equal to her former self. But weakness, if it exists, is more than atoned for by the splendor of her intelligence, her scholarly and refined elocution, the pathos, the simplicity, the effectiveness of her action. It is one thing to play a queen's part, it is another thing to look like a queen. We wish some of the young ladies who think themselves tragic actresses, and who trust to their pretty faces and elaborate toilets for success, would take lessons from the carriage of Miss Cushman. She, at least, derived no aid from the magnificence of dress, or from personal beauty; but there was a royalty in her demeanor, a consciousness of power in her every movement, which made *her* the one figure of interest on the stage."

One more extract will suffice.

"The announcement that this will be Miss Cushman's closing engagement will cause many a pang of regret, that this great actress, this unequalled reader, most thorough artist, and noble lady, is to be seen no more upon the stage she has graced with her presence so long. Her life, which has not even now 'fallen into the sere and yellow leaf,' is one that can be set forth as a bright example of what energy, intelligence, virtue, and independence of character can accomplish. Women on the stage nowadays owe much of their popularity to their beauty. Miss Cushman never was beautiful, except in that beauty and nobility of *character* which shines through her face and irradiates it with a strange glory of truthfulness, of honor, and of refinement.

"The special glory of Miss Cushman's final representations has been that they bore evidence of enlarged thought and culture without losing any of their old efficiency. She came back to say adieu in her old strenuous way, after a lifetime spent

in the service of the drama, and she wins us again, not by a renewal of her old powers, but by the disclosure of new ones. It was impossible not to see that she had broader views of human nature, and had obtained a deeper insight into its secrets; that her sensibilities were as keen as ever, but that her judgment was matured; in a word, that she was none the less the great actress, but more than ever the finished artist.

"Let us not fail to make fitting record of this before the priestess of an almost deserted temple passes out of our sight forever; no nobler record can we well make, and none that will carry so valuable a lesson to those neophytes who may hereafter minister in the same temple. Standing at this moment before her countrymen, the recipient of honors that are now, alas! rare in her profession, recognized as a representative artist, let us not forget that the greatest boon she has conferred upon the American stage is her demonstration that it is possible to combine genius and culture, goodness and greatness."

Miss Cushman spent the Christmas of this year (1871) at Hyde Park, and was very happy and merry in spite of her physical ills. She enjoyed the country at all seasons, and never felt a moment's ennui or weariness, although at that season there was no social life but what the four walls and the family circle afforded her. She occupied herself in preparing her readings, took long walks and drives, and was apparently well and strong, though always conscious of her "enemy," as she called her ailment. On the 15th of January, 1872, she started on her Western tour, and passed the months of March, April, and May reading and acting in various places. On the 3d and 4th of April she gave two very successful readings in Philadelphia, and on the 7th she made a visit to her friend Mr. William B. Ogden, at his well-known country-seat in the neighborhood of New York. It was not until June 10

that she took possession of her villa at Newport, which had been built during her absence. She concluded her season of work by giving a reading for the benefit of the Newport Hospital, on August 20; and on the 23d she read for the Protestant Episcopal Chapel at Narragansett.

The reading which Miss Cushman gave at Narragansett deserves a more particular mention. She went over early on the day appointed (a lovely morning in August), accompanied by a party of friends, and was received with great distinction by the lady under whose auspices the reading had been inaugurated, Mrs. W. B. Richards of Boston, and the numerous summer visitors of the hotels which stand all along the shore of Narragansett Bay. The reading took place in the chapel for the benefit of which it was intended, and was a very successful affair. Towards evening a large assembly of admiring and grateful friends accompanied her to the landing, and the little steamer sailed away upon the summer sea amid cheers and waving of handkerchiefs. It was one of those wonderful evenings of which Newport only is capable: a sunset of unexampled glory illuminated the sea and touched with points of fire the distant buildings and the nearer islands; a calm serenity, as of a good deed happily accomplished, filled the air and gently touched all hearts. It was an evening which all those who shared its sweetness will long remember.

On the occasion of the reading for the benefit of the Newport Hospital a proposition was made to Miss Cushman, by one of the wealthy and fashionable summer residents, that she should give the reading at her house, which was freely placed at Miss Cushman's disposal. She declined the proposition, on the ground that as she was reading for the benefit of the people of Newport, she pre-

MISS CUSHMAN'S VILLA, NEWPORT, R. I.

ferred to do so in a place to which they might more freely come; and she therefore gave it in the town itself. It was a very successful effort, notwithstanding that the people for whom she made it had not public spirit enough to avail themselves as fully as might have been expected of her kindly thoughtfulness.

After October 11th follows a long season of acting and reading in all parts of the country. She was acting in Boston at the time of the great fire, and her engagement was interrupted by that calamity. On December 5th she again went West, arriving on the 14th of January in New Orleans, having engaged to act with Mr. Lawrence Barrett's company there and in other Southern cities. This was a most disastrous experience. After acting a week in New Orleans she was taken seriously ill, and, notwithstanding every effort and struggle on her part to keep her engagements, found herself compelled to abandon them. From Montgomery she started, still very weak and ill, with recurring chills and fever, to make the best of her way to Philadelphia and her good doctor there. The journey was a terrible one; owing to the season, and want of proper information as to the route, she encountered every kind of discomfort; missing connections and obliged to stop over at the most God-forsaken places, unable to procure suitable food, and obliged, when she did move, to take the poorest kind of accommodation. At length, on the 12th of February she arrived, much prostrated, in Philadelphia, and remained there under the doctor's care until the 1st of March, when she was sufficiently recovered to recommence work at Washington. Following this, she moved with her usual rapidity from point to point, reading, acting, and visiting in various places.

From a series of letters written during the years

1872–74 I make some brief extracts, which show where and how she was at those dates, and carry on the record in the best way, namely, from her own lips. Her life was too full for her letters to be much more than brief memoranda of the facts of each day, written to relieve the anxiety of friends at a distance; but interesting, as all letters from people of marked character must ever be. Her summer had been spent mostly at Newport, in the midst of her family. On September 28th she writes from there, speaking of the departure of the children and the break-up of her home for the summer.

"I do not get over my dreadful depression and sickness of heart, and I cannot reason myself out of it. I suppose it is that I am weaker than ever before, and the summer has been a greater strain upon me than I knew, until the reaction came. I have had much trial this summer, more than any one knows. First, the excitement of getting into the house, then the heat, the arrival of the things from Rome, and the sickness of soul over the memories that were awakened at the sight of them; but most of all, the wrench I had at last in the departure of my children, the breaking up and being left alone. I have been very lonely. This is a confession of weakness; but enough of myself."

From Swampscott, one of her favorite places, she writes to a friend: —

"Your dear spirit is all around me in this sweet place, and I seem to be sure that I shall find you in your own room if I go out and return; but, alas! I shall not see you until a fortnight from this day, when we will have a *jubilation*, won't we? I had a tremendous success in my reading yesterday. Phillips Brooks says it is the most wonderful '*growth*' since last year, and many others say the same. George Macdonald and his wife were so enthusiastic that when you know the quiet people that they are it will seem wonderful. He speaks of me in his

lecture on Burns, where he repeats some lines, and says, 'If I had my friend Miss Cushman here to read it to you, she would show you much more meaning in it than *I* can.' Fields also refers to me in his 'Masters of the Situation.' So you see I am getting spoiled. I read the 'Skeleton in Armor' *well*, and the effect was fine. I made the 'fearful guest' speak in monotone, like the ghost in 'Hamlet,' and you cannot think how strange and weird it sounded. You could hear a pin drop in that vast hall, which, after all, is a most awful place to speak in. I was tired, but not so much so as I expected. 'Ivry' brought down the house at every verse, and our good friend here says he don't believe any other woman, or man, could give the 'Hurrah!' with me. So much for all that part of me; the other *home* part of me hurried away from the hall as fast as the 'dear five hundred friends,' who came to the artists' room to speak to me and thank me, would permit, glad to get back to my dear hostess, who is the soul of goodness, and 'just adores me.'"

With reference to the above reading a friend writes to Miss Cushman one of those little tokens which more clearly than anything else give the *feeling* her efforts at this time were eliciting from her friends and the public.

"DEAR FRIEND: Let me tell you of the entire and perfect success of your last evening's reading. My most critical judgment could not pick a flaw in you or your work. You looked and did superbly. It is to the praise of modern things that in your half-dozen selections you could gather up such sweet and noble sentiment; and that you could succeed, either in getting out of it or putting into it, such exquisite shadings of thought and feeling, seemed to everybody simply wonderful. I was never among a more impressed and delighted audience; a sense of awe, half of affright, oppressed me, that one personality could hold and exactly express so many and varied individuals. Even now, after a night's sleep, when you came to me once and again, I have still that vague shadowy sense as of some-

thing supernatural about me. Who shall say how superhuman are the human capabilities? Well, dear, I am glad of a noble woman in the world."

I find the following characteristic bit in one of her own letters of June 6th:—

"I am so sorry to hear that your mother has dropped down again. She was very likely to do so in the quiet of the country. She requires a peculiar kind of entertainment, just the kind that 'so poor a man as Hamlet is' can give her,—a mixture of rattle, nonsense, and sympathy; in fact, you will have to keep an *actor* for her (private), and M—— must learn to endure the presence of such for her sake. You will be able to trace almost daily my stages of being and doing by my tone in writing. I am too born a demonstrator to hide anything. 'They tell all.'"

Under date of June 26th she writes discouragingly of herself:—

"I do get so dreadfully depressed about myself, and all things seem so hopeless to me at those times, that I pray God to take me quickly at any moment, so that I am not allowed to torture those I love by letting them see my pain. But when the dark hour passes, and I try to forget by constant occupapation that I have such a load near my heart, then it is not so bad."

In July she writes:—

"I am being pursued by managers, and have promised, if *I am entirely able*, and not otherwise, to act in New York for four weeks, commencing the 12th of January; and if the production of 'Guy Mannering' on a grand scale should be successful, I have said I would not interfere with it by going elsewhere. So from January to February I shall be in New York *somewhere*. But I can promise nothing absolutely, for I am not well, and I suppose I shall not work any more. Still, it gives

me something to think of. I must tell you of a funny thing that occurred the other day. A friend had heard of a pair of horses which he wanted me to buy, but when he wrote for them they were sold. He told me yesterday that the man said, 'Miss Cushman ought to have had them, for they were named Edwin Booth and Charles Fechter.' I should have declined such a pair, as not likely to work well together!"

Speaking of a certain theatrical débût about this time, she says: "These women don't know what they want, but like to try everything, to prove *how easy it is!*"

The letters of this time constantly end with the prayer, "Ah, I pray God in his infinite mercy to take me quickly, that I may not wear out those who love me!" And to the friend to whom she writes daily, who is laboring under a heavy trial, she says:—

"God bless you and help you in all ways to bear, to endure, and be patient. This is the best prayer I can make for you, and it covers all the ground of a life. From my soul I make it a hundred times a day; but prayers are all I can give you to help you. I am not able to come to give you comfort and strength by my presence."

She was at this time exercising the duties of hospitality to a large indoor and outdoor circle. Her brother and her niece had come over from England, and the Villa was stretched to its utmost capacity to hold and entertain the friends whom it was her chief pleasure to draw about her. She never thought of want of room; the impulse towards kindness came first, the ways and means of executing it followed; and it was amazing, and not a little amusing, to see the shifts to which she resorted rather than disappoint or delay the proposed visit of a friend. She used to say, "This is Liberty Hall; every one does as *I* please." And, indeed, the homelike, genial atmosphere she created

about her made every one content and happy in the narrowest quarters.

She was at this time singing sometimes the sacred songs of Gounod, and enjoying them herself in the enjoyment of others. Speaking of one of these, "There is a Green Hill far Away," she writes:—

"I cannot give you an idea of its beauty, for the accompaniments are truly splendid, and our friend D—— so enjoys my singing it that he plays it beautifully. I wind them up sometimes with 'Father Molloy,' and they go off to bed very happy and merry."

Other letters of this time are not so bright and hopeful. She is suffering more, and feels the weight of care and responsibility in so large a household and such abounding hospitality.

"I am subject to many interruptions," she writes, "from all directions, and so get confused and worried. I sometimes find myself wishing I had no house, and all who have 'a place of their own' will find in time they are likely to repent taking such care upon themselves, and I wish 'Bailie Nicol Jarvie's boots had been full of hot water before he had entered on sic a damnable errand!'

"The casino is going on this year, just opposite, and twice a week the band plays and the carriages congregate around and in front of this house, and the sound of music and voices reaches me through my house, and to my writing-table. I have not been; when I can go in a calico gown, and *take my sewing*, I will go. I don't think I will go before. I have not yet thought what sewing it will be; if it were so-so-ing I could go any day, for that is my usual occupation."

Among her visitors at this time were her friends John Gilbert and his wife, and she thus speaks of the pleasure their visit afforded her:—

"*August* 11*th*. — I spent a perfectly indolent day yesterday;

that is, if indolence can be where one is busy all the time with reminiscences and talks of old friends and old times, and later times and later people. I talked more yesterday than I have talked in a fortnight, and yet I was not tired. What makes the difference? Some people tire me to death even when I don't talk myself; others don't tire me when I do all the talking. Is it that I love the sound of my own voice, and am vain and conceited? If so, why don't I talk to the others, and find pleasure in my own voice? No; it seems to me that some people are sympathetic, and that others, however kind and good they may be, are not so. Now on Saturday John Gilbert and his wife came; and although I sigh when people get out at the door, yet I was very pleased to see this old friend of my childhood, who has been in feeling like a brother to me ever since I was little; even though we have had no association for years, yet we always meet just where we left off, and are always happy when we are talking to each other. Yesterday I went to a luncheon-party. It was pleasant, and of course *I acted hard*, as I always do; but everybody *seemed* pleased with me, and they were all very agreeable people. There were ten of us, and we made a great noise, which they say is a good sign for *fun*, but not so much for convention. I cannot let people be conventional where I am, for I don't know how, and when I go to play with people, they must play my way; is it not so? And this is the *only* thing I will admit I am dogmatic in. Of course I was good for nothing when I came home; had to go to bed at once; but later I did a portion of 'Midsummer Night's Dream' with John, and he says I am *awfully funny* in Bottom. We shall see."

On the 25th of August she left Newport for change of air, the climate of that place being unfavorable for her during the muggy heats and fogs of August, and spent a delightful week in exploring the recesses of the Catskill range under the convoy of Mr. William B. Ogden, who, being a native of that locality, made the excursion very pleasant with his memories and reminiscences. They trav-

elled short distances each day by carriage, stopping each night at some one of the pleasant towns which lie all along the course of the Delaware River. She was as usual warmly interested in all she saw and heard; the country was lovely, and the long hours' driving in the open air helped and strengthened her much.

September was passed chiefly at Newport, and it was not until October that she started on her Western journey, in better general health than she had been during the summer, and, from the tone of her letters, in excellent spirits also. She began acting in Chicago on the 13th October, following up at Rochester, Cleveland, Toledo, Detroit, Buffalo, and Boston.

These letters of 1873–74, written under all the pressure of steady work and perpetual travel, are wonderful evidences of her remarkable physical powers, as well as of the bright sunshiny nature which could not be long lowered or depressed by outer circumstances. They have not a morbid note in them. If a trial or a pain comes, it is told frankly, but always with some hopeful comment or some comforting bit of philosophy. Writing from Elmira, she says: —

"In Utica, on Monday, I thought I should be blown away; the wind blew like 'cinque centi diavoli,' as they say in Italy. I am glad you think I did right in the way I have given up my summer. I did it unselfishly, and so it has gone well. I never think much of what I do for *my own;* God gave them to *me* and *me* to them just for that purpose, and I am simply doing my duty to help them to health and happiness if I can. Thus you say comforting things when you say I have done well. . . . .

"Yes, you are right; little people *are* conceited, some big people, too, sometimes, but little people *always.* If you could have seen three people with whom I dined on Sunday, three

of the littlest people you ever saw, and three such conceits! I sat dumb in wonderment, and they all talked, and *would* talk. This sort must, you know, even if no one understands or cares for what they are saying."

On November 16th she writes:—

"I was in a sort of trap at Springfield, Ohio; could not get out, or make sure connection anywhere, unless I went in a *caboose car* on a freight train from Springfield to Urbana. I had to start at nine o'clock; of course starting at nine makes me out of bed at seven. The horror of being left at this place was so great, that I kept waking all night, and asking Sallie what time it was, for fear she should oversleep herself. At seven I was up and, marvellous to relate, *dressed in an hour;* got some breakfast, and walked to the station, for I had to go to the freight department and start from there. But that same caboose car was a clean as a pink, a nice gentlemanly fellow, of *that* class, was the conductor, and I was able to walk about and pick up information generally. Well, the day was more gorgeous than anything you can imagine. I stood by an open window all the fourteen miles, and enjoyed the warm balminess of the air after the wet and cold and gloom I had been enduring. Arrived at Urbana, I had to wait an hour and a half for the train; of course the waiting-room was so hot that it was impossible to sit in it. So I walked up and down in the sun, thinking, determining, resolving, and promising our Lady of Loretto, etc., etc., if ever I got out of this, etc., etc., etc., I would never, etc., etc., etc., any more. By the by, as I make these three signs of etc., it strikes me very much like the geographical or geometrical designs of my journeyings since I left you, for such up and downs, ins and outs, to's and froms I have never before encountered *in succession*. I have committed some escapades, but they were short and sharp. This has been a long-drawn-out affair."

The above allusion to "our Lady of Loretto" was a reminiscence of a witty friend, who was wont on any occa-

sion of difficulty or emergency to promise two candlesticks to our Lady of Loretto, with inimitable grace and unction.

In a sad letter from Toledo, November 26, she writes:—

"I have got off acting at a matinée, which was first intended, and I shall give thanks for that, and all the infinite mercies of God to me, for they are *manifold*. I am suffering a good deal more pain than I like to acknowledge, and only when I am on the stage or asleep am I unconscious of it. This has been unceasing since the summer, and I suppose I must expect it; but while I can bear it I am wrong to give any expression of it, even to you. It is wicked of me to say anything about it, and I have a great mind to destroy this letter; and yet, and yet, when we regularly *face* our real troubles I believe they become more endurable, and the thought conveyed in one of your last letters, that anything happening to me would kill you, gives me much sad thought. I have been spared much longer than you or I ever thought possible when my trouble first declared itself. We ought to be better prepared by this time, and we must school ourselves for what is inevitable; though I am a poor creature to talk in this way, for I cannot accept even the inevitable without fighting. I have fought, God knows, very hard for four years, especially the two last; but I know my enemy, he is ever before me, and he must conquer; but I cannot give up to him. I laugh in his face and try to be jolly, and I am! I declare I am, even when he presses me hardest, and you must try to be so too. You must not mind these landmarks which you get occasionally from me in any other way than to make you more and more resigned to the changes which must come some time to everybody, and which, wandering as I do, and running other risks than those which fate seems to have marked out distinctly for me, might come to me any day and any hour."

After a severe illness in Baltimore, which obliged her to stop short in all her engagements for a time, she writes upon recovery, February 14th:—

"I am so grieved to hear you are not well; but keep up a good heart, courage, and let us thank God that we are both lifted out of our troubles and anxieties, and we shall be comforted by the laying of ourselves at his feet, for that means resignation and self-abnegation, and with both of these comes help; and only in self-abnegation and self-sacrifice *does help come.* Then God takes up his part, but while we will help ourselves he permits us. I have a lovely day for my journey, and all promises well. Once in Philadelphia you must have no anxiety about me, for is not God and my good doctor there?"

After this the tone of her letters is better and more hopeful for some time. She is again looking forward to work, and laying out plans for the future; but she says:—

"Ah, how we lay out plans, and how they are all frustrated and hopes shattered and calculations blown to air by an over-excitement! Hereafter, neither before nor after my readings will I do anything but rest, and always during my readings I must wear a bit and a bridle."

It is from Wilkesbarre she is writing:—

"Let us be fashionable, or perish. So I begin my note of to-day writing across the paper instead of the usual way. I sit, as I write, and look across a large yellow river to the opposite stretch of hills, upon which the sun is lying in a March-y way. The wind is slapping the branches of the trees against one another, and loosening the sap-cells, and very soon, in a three days' change, spring will be upon us. You and I have been passing through our blowing sand slappings, and we shall, as soon as bright days come, be like birds, hopping, singing, and making everybody jolly about us."

May 18th. During this interval Miss Cushman had gone through a very successful reading engagement in

New York, and had put herself under a course of water-treatment which she thought was helping her. Under this date she writes: —

"I am satisfied that the treatment is doing me good, not, perhaps, by any evidence in my special malady, but in my general condition. I am feeling generally much better. I am certainly going through my work wonderfully; my spirits are better, and I can do more. I am sure it is the treatment. I am so settled in my faith in this, that I think I will consent to the engagement offered me at Booth's Theatre for October."

During the rest of this summer she pursued the water-treatment with her usual firm persistence in whatever she once accepted. In some respects, as the foregoing letter will show, she found benefit, and there can be no doubt it relieved her of some unfavorable symptoms; but as time went on there were evidences that the time for giving up the active work of her profession was at hand.

Her last engagement at Booth's Theatre was the result of these convictions, though when she entered upon it she had no thought of taking a formal farewell of the stage. She had already made engagements to act, if she were able, in various parts of the country, and, as everybody knows, theatrical engagements are fixed and irrevocable facts, which cannot be altered or modified except under conditions of absolute inability from illness. Afterwards, when the farewell at Booth's Theatre was determined on, and the ovation tendered to her which assumed such formidable proportions, she herself explained to the public that she was still under these engagements, and also that in leaving the stage she reserved to herself the right of appearing at the reading-desk. This explanation seemed necessary at the time, and is therefore

repeated here in justice to her memory against some unworthy comments which were made, let us hope in ignorance of the true state of the case. With regard to the ovation, Miss Cushman was herself perhaps the person who knew least about it of all the parties concerned; rumors of what was intended reached her from time to time, and she took pains to utter earnest protests against any proceedings which seemed to her exaggerated or wanting in true dignity. Whatever was carried out which could be so characterized was contrary to her wishes, though she, in common with all who cared for her, could not but be deeply impressed by the depth, warmth, and enthusiasm of the demonstration. Under all its aspects it can only be looked upon as a grand testimonial; for such expressions of feeling cannot even be *got up* without a true and solid foundation.

CHAPTER XII.

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN'S FAREWELL TO NEW YORK.

> "My Lords, I care not (so much I am happy
> Above a number) if my actions
> Were tried by every tongue, every eye saw them,
> Envy and base opinion set against them,
> I know my life so even."
>
> *Henry VIII.*

THE newspapers gave full particulars of the event, and it is not so far distant that it is not well remembered; but for the sake of those who come after us, to whom all that relates to Miss Cushman will soon be only a tradition, I insert here a brief abstract of the ceremonies of the occasion.

Remembrance will long bear in mind the incidents of the Saturday night at Booth's Theatre, when Charlotte Cushman took her final leave of the metropolitan stage. The scene was one of quite extraordinary beauty and interest. The spacious theatre was crowded in every part by an assemblage comprising all that is most worthy and distinguished in our civic circle of literature, art, learning, and society. Faces of known and honored persons were seen in every direction. All that could be desired of intellect and brilliancy in an audience, and all that could be devised of tasteful accessories for a great occasion, were gathered and provided here, and the occasion proved in

every way worthy of the motive that prompted it, the idea that it celebrated, and the anticipations it aroused.

The play was "Macbeth"; upon the performances there is here no reason to pause. The personation has passed into history as one of the greatest dramatic achievements of our age; and the word for the hour is not so much a recognition of its established excellence, as a record of an ovation, not more brilliant than deserved to illustrious genius and imperishable renown.

It was about eleven o'clock when the curtain fell upon the tragedy. An interval ensued: when it was again lifted, one of the most distinguished companies that has ever been seen in a public place came into view. The stage was crowded with representative faces in art, literature, and the drama. The venerable head of William Cullen Bryant occupied the centre of the group; Mr. Charles Roberts, who had been selected to read Mr. Stoddard's ode, appeared at the right of the stand, which was composed of the beautiful floral testimonials offered to Miss Cushman.

The actress herself, who had doffed her tragic robes, and appeared *in propria persona* in a tasteful dress of steel-gray silk, simple and without ornament, entered amid plaudits which shook the building, and took her place upon the left of the stage, and the ceremonies of farewell began with the recitation of the ode.

SALVE, REGINA.

THE race of greatness never dies;
Here, there, its fiery children rise,
Perform their splendid parts,
And captive take our hearts.

Men, women of heroic mould,
Have overcome us from of old;

Crowns waited then, as now,
For every royal brow.

The victor in the Olympic games, —
His name among the proudest names
Was handed deathless down;
To him the olive crown.

And they, the poets, grave and sage,
Stern masters of the tragic stage,
Who moved by art austere
To pity, love, and fear, —

To those was given the laurel crown,
Whose lightest leaf conferred renown
That through the ages fled
Still circles each gray head.

But greener laurels cluster now,
World-gathered, on his spacious brow,
In his supremest place,
Greatest of their great race, —

Shakespeare! Honor to him, and her
Who stands his grand interpreter,
Stepped out of his broad page
Upon the living stage.

The unseen hands that shape our fate
Moulded her strongly, made her great,
And gave her for her dower
Abundant life and power.

To her the sister Muses came,
Proffered their marks, and promised fame;
She chose the tragic, rose
To its imperial woes.

What queen unqueened is here? what wife,
Whose long bright years of loving life
Are suddenly darkened? Fate
Has crushed, but left her great.

Abandoned for a younger face,
She sees another fill her place,
Be more than she has been, —
Most wretched wife and queen!

O royal sufferer! patient heart!
Lay down thy burdens and depart;
"Mine eyes grow dim. Farewell,"
They ring her passing-bell.

And thine, thy knell shall soon be rung,
Lady, the valor of whose tongue,
That did not urge in vain,
Stung the irresolute Thane

To bloody thoughts, and deeds of death, —
The evil genius of Macbeth;
But thy strong will must break,
And thy poor heart must ache.

Sleeping she sleeps not; night betrays
The secret that consumes her days.
Behold her where she stands
And rubs her guilty hands.

From darkness, by the midnight fire,
Withered and weird, in wild attire,
Starts spectral on the scene
The stern old gypsy queen.

She croons his simple cradle-song,
She will redress his ancient wrong, —
The rightful heir come back,
With murder on his track.

Commanding, crouching, dangerous, kind,
Confusion in her darkened mind,
The pathos in her years
Compels the soul to tears.

Bring laurel! go, ye tragic Three,
And strip the sacred laurel-tree,
And at her feet lay down
Here, now, a triple crown.

Salve, Regina! Art and song,
Dismissed by thee, shall miss thee long,
And keep thy memory green, —
Our most illustrious queen!

Mr. Bryant then delivered the following address: —

"MADAM: The members of the Arcadian Club have desired me to present you with a crown of laurel. Although of late years little familiar with matters connected with the stage, I make it a pleasure to comply with their request. Be pleased to receive it as both a token of their proud admiration of your genius and their high esteem for your personal character. You remember the line of the poet Spenser, —

'The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors.'

Well is that line applied in the present instance. The laurel is the proper ornament for the brow of one who has won so eminent and enviable a renown by successive conquests in the realm of histrionic art. You have taken a queenly rank in your profession; you have carried into one department of it after another the triumphs of your genius; you have interpreted through the eye and ear to the sympathies of vast assemblages of men and women the words of the greatest dramatic writers; what came to your hands in the skeleton form you have clothed with sinews and flesh, and given it warm blood and a beating heart. Receive, then, the laurel crown as a token of what is conceded to you, as a symbol of the regal state in your profession to which you have risen and so illustriously hold."

Mr. Bryant then tendered her a laurel wreath bound with white ribbon, which rested on a purple velvet cushion. Embroidered in golden letters is this inscription: —

C. C.
"PALMAM QUI MERUIT FERAT."
18 A. C. 74.

The letters "A. C." form the monogram of the Arcadian Club. Miss Cushman responded to this address in the following words: —

"Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks, but I thank you. Gentlemen, the heart has no speech; its only language is a tear or a pressure of the hand, and words very feebly convey or interpret its emotions. Yet I would beg you to believe that in the three little words I now speak, 'I thank you,' there are heart depths which I should fail to express better, though I should use a thousand other words. I thank you, gentlemen, for the great honor you have offered me. I thank you, not only for myself, but for my whole profession, to which, through and by me, you have paid this very graceful compliment. If the few words I am about to say savor of egotism or vainglory, you will, I am sure, pardon me, inasmuch as I am here only to speak of myself. You would seem to compliment me upon an honorable life. As I look back upon that life, it seems to me that it would have been impossible for me to have led any other. In this I have, perhaps, been mercifully helped more than are many of my more beautiful sisters in art. I was, by a press of circumstances, thrown at an early age into a profession for which I had received no special education or training; but I had already, though so young, been brought face to face with necessity. I found life sadly real and intensely earnest, and in my ignorance of other ways of study, I resolved to take therefrom my text and my watchword. To be thoroughly *in earnest*, intensely in earnest in all my thoughts and in all my actions, whether *in* my profession or *out* of it, became my one single idea. And I honestly believe herein lies the secret of my success in life. I do not believe that any great success in any art can be achieved without it.

"I say this to the beginners in my profession, and I am sure all the associates in my art, who have honored me with their presence on this occasion, will indorse what I say in this. Art is an absolute mistress; she will not be coquetted

with or slighted; she requires the most entire self-devotion, and she repays with grand triumphs.

"To you, gentlemen of the Arcadian Club, and to all who have united to do me honor, — to the younger poet who has enthroned me in his verse, and to the older poet who brings the prestige of his name and fame to add a glory to the crown he offers me; to the managers of this theatre, who have so liberally met all my wishes and requirements during this engagement, as well as to the members of the company who have so cheerfully seconded my efforts; and last, not least, to the members of my profession who have so graciously added by their presence to the happiness of this occasion, I return my cordial thanks.

"To my public — what shall I say? From the depths of my heart I thank *you*, who have given me always consideration, encouragement, and patience; who have been ever my comfort, my support, my main help. I do not now say farewell to you in the usual sense of the word. In making my final representations upon the mimic scene in the various cities of the country, I have reserved to myself the right of meeting you again where you have made me believe that I give you the pleasure which I receive myself at the same time, — at the reading-desk. To you, then, I say, may you *fare* well and may I *fare* well, until at no distant day we meet again — *there*. Meanwhile, good, kind friends, good night, and God be with you."

The ceremonies of this notable occasion terminated with a serenade and display of fireworks in front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, where many friends had assembled to greet Miss Cushman on her return from the theatre.

I find in one of Miss Cushman's own letters a reference to this event, which shows her own position with regard to it.

"I acted eight times last week," she writes, "beside that fearful affair after the play on Saturday. They say such a

demonstration has never been made before, not even political. The number of people in front of the hotel must have been near 25,000, and it looked exactly like the Piazza del Popolo at the fireworks. I wish the children could have seen it; it was a thing they should have seen, to remember in connection with their 'big mama.' You must tell them all about it, how the whole big square in front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel was crammed with human beings. They could not move, they were so densely packed.

"The sight in the theatre was magnificent. Then the ceremony at the end, which had made me sick all the week, for I was frightened lest I should forget what I had to say. Then I did not know what they were going to do, for when I would protest against this or that they would tell me it should not be, and yet I felt sure they would do what they pleased; and so it turned out; for, though I had said if they carried out their plan of white horses and escort with torches, etc., I would remain in the theatre all night, yet, when I got into my carriage at the private (carpenters') entrance on Twenty-third Street, expecting to go quietly to the hotel, where I had invited private friends to meet me, I found myself surrounded by a mass of human beings with torches and fireworks, rockets sent up all the way along up to the front entrance of the hotel, and a most indescribable noise and confusion. The corridors of the hotel were as crowded as the streets outside, and I could scarcely make my way along. Then, after a time, I had to make my appearance in the balcony, and then the shouting was something awful to hear. I was ready to drop with fatigue, so I only could wave my handkerchief to them, and went in, not getting to my bed before half past two."

FAREWELL TO PHILADELPHIA.

On Saturday afternoon, November 14, 1874, Miss Charlotte Cushman played Meg Merrilies, and on Saturday evening, Lady Macbeth, for the last time, before

that country, and make the acquaintance of its people, but it was too late; after this she was never able to undertake the journey; as soon as she was sufficiently recovered, — and she rose up from these violent attacks for a long time in a wonderful way, — she gave readings at Chicago and Milwaukee, Cleveland, Buffalo, and Ithaca.

December 18th she returned to New York, and read at Trenton, Morristown, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington.

Among the many graceful tributes to Miss Cushman with which I might crowd my pages, I must not omit those of her true poet-friend, Sidney Lanier, who, though coming into the circle of her friendship during these latter years, won for himself there a warm and high place. She met him for the first time on this visit to Baltimore, and, already much interested in him through his writings, sought his acquaintance, and expressed to him in her wonted earnest way the pleasure they had given her. The interest with which she inspired *him* he has enshrined in his own verses, and I am permitted to let them speak for themselves.

(With a copy of "Corn.")

TO MISS CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

O what a perilous waste from low to high,
Must this poor book from me to you o'erleap, —
From me, who wander in the nights that lie
About Fame's utmost vague foundations deep,
To you, that sit on Fame's most absolute height,
Distinctly starred, e'en in that awful light!

SIDNEY LANIER.

January 27, 1875.

And in another and later sonnet: —

TO CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

Look where a three-point star shall weave his beam
Into the slumbrous tissue of some stream,

Till his bright self o'er his bright copy seem
Fulfilment dropping on a come-true dream;
So in this night of art thy soul doth show
Her excellent double in the steadfast flow
Of wishing love that through men's hearts doth go;
At once thou shin'st above and shin'st below.
E'en when thou strivest there within Art's sky
(Each star must o'er a strenuous orbit fly),
Full calm thine image in our love doth lie,
A motion glassed in a tranquillity.
So triple-rayed thou mov'st, yet stay'st, serene, —
Art's artist, Love's dear woman, Fame's good queen!

SIDNEY LANIER.

And again, when he published a volume of poems, the deep feeling of mingled tenderness and admiration which he felt for her finds fit utterance in the "Dedication."

TO CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

As Love will carve dear names upon a tree,
Symbol of gravure on his heart to be,

So thought I thine with loving text to set
In the growth and substance of my Canzonet;

But, writing it, my tears begin to fall —
This wild-rose stem for thy large name's too small!

Nay, still my trembling hands are fain, are fain
Cut the good letters though they lap again;

Perchance such folk as mark the blur and stain
Will say, *It was the beating of the rain;*

Or haply these o'er-woundings of the stem
May loose some little balm, to plead for them.

S. L.

On the 5th of February, 1875, she read in Albany, stopping with Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Seward, travelling on the 8th to Chicago, through the very coldest weather of the season, and acting in Chicago from the 15th to the 26th. On the 27th she began a week's engagement in Cincin-

nati, and on the 7th of March started for St. Louis. In consequence of a heavy snow-storm she missed connection at Indianapolis, and was detained so long on the road, that she only arrived in time to go directly to the theatre and act Lady Macbeth the same night. This was a splendid example of her power of rising above difficulty in the discharge of duty. Although exhausted by a long journey, and far from well, she could not disappoint manager or public. After a slight rest and refreshment she went upon the stage, and acted Lady Macbeth so that none among her audience knew she was not in full force, or missed anything in the impersonation. She fulfilled her engagement of five nights; but it was at the expense of another attack of illness, from which she rose up to give a reading, and afterwards to read and act at Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, — in the latter place, to an audience of three thousand.

During this period of rapid movement and constant occupation the letters are only brief bulletins of her state and progress, and there are no noteworthy incidents to chronicle; except that I find in one of them an expression of her pleasure in seeing Ristori act, and describing a graceful little incident which occurred on one of these occasions. She writes: —

"I have been to the theatre two nights to see Ristori in "Elizabetta" and "Marie Antoinette." I wished for you very much to see her with me. She is the greatest female artist I have ever seen. Such perfect nature, such ease, such grace, such elegance of manner, such as befits a queen. On Monday night I sat in the director's box, holding a beautiful bouquet of roses and lilies of the valley for her. At the end of the second act she was called, the curtain was lifted, and she came down with some of the others. As I lifted the bouquet she saw it and came over to the box. She is near-sighted, so did

not recognize me until she came near; then she gave a start toward me, saying, 'Ah, cara amica!' She almost put her arms around me, and would have kissed me if I had let her. We exchanged words to know where each was staying, the audience all this while applauding tremendously. Friends say it was one of the prettiest sights they ever saw, and the audience seemed to think so. She came to see me yesterday, and we had a long, long talk; I floundering about in Italian, and she talking like an angel. Her voice is the most lovely, and her mouth the most fascinating, after Titiens, of any artist I ever saw. The 'Marie Antoinette' lasted four hours and a quarter. I am sorry to miss the 'Lucrezia Borgia' to-night, but I am already suffering too much from the indulgence. I go on to Baltimore on Saturday. I never know what I can do till I try [the *mot d'ordre* of all true artists], and I shall try to fulfil my engagements."

FAREWELL TO BOSTON.

Miss Cushman's farewell to the Boston public, which took place on the 15th of May, 1875, was an occasion of a less demonstrative kind than that of New York, but, from its associations, more interesting. She appeared as Lady Macbeth, and "never," as the chronicles of the time have borne due witness, "with a grander force, a deeper intellectuality, or a broader sweep of passion than characterized this, her final impersonation. It is no light thing for an artist to bid farewell to a career which has been the loved occupation of a long and thoughtful life, in which she has reigned supreme for over a quarter of a century. Nor is it more easy when she is aware that her genius is yet undimmed and her power unabated. Whether it was owing to the associations of the time and place or not, Miss Cushman seemed to throw a deeper pathos into her efforts, and the last song of the swan appeared to all to be the sweetest."

When the curtain rose again, after the conclusion of the tragedy, it discovered two fine bronze copies of the celebrated statues of Mercury and Fortune, the gifts of a number of Miss Cushman's friends and admirers,* intended as a memento of the occasion. Miss Cushman was led forward by Mr. Arthur Cheney, a number of gentlemen grouped themselves about her, and Mr. Curtis Guild delivered an address, from which I make the following extracts: —

"Miss Cushman and Ladies and Gentlemen: —

"The retirement from the dramatic profession of one who has so long been recognized as one of its most distinguished representatives, and who has done so much to elevate dramatic art, is, in itself, an event of more than ordinary moment.

"But when it occurs here, in the native city of the artist, and among those who have followed her from the commencement of her eventful career with hope and admiration, and claimed her as our own with pride at its culmination, it is felt that the occasion should not be permitted to pass without an attempt to express, in the most decided manner, the feelings of her many friends, who deem it a privilege to do her honor.

"Now that you are about to cast aside the robes of the artist forever, to abdicate, not resign, the dramatic sceptre of the American stage, — for who is to wield that which you have so long swayed as queen? — now that you are to close your eventful and successful career with a fame honorably won and name untarnished, — you that 'have outstripped all praise and made it halt behind you,' — it is not surprising that every true lover of dramatic art hastens to do eager homage, and that hosts of warm and hearty friends should

* In consequence of Miss Cushman's house being already overcrowded with works of art of a like character, and also innumerable articles still unpacked for want of space, the bronzes above mentioned were, with the approval of all concerned, changed for a tasteful gift in silver.

press forward for the last hand-grasp of her whom they honor and respect.

"The players' profession, we well know, from the earliest days, when in Greece it was held honorable and in Rome a despised vocation, has been assailed by fierce opponents. The great poet of all time himself, we read in the annals of the English stage, came into the world when the English portion of it was ringing with denunciations against the profession which the child in his humble cradle at Stratford-on-Avon was about to ennoble forever. We need not go back as far as Shakespeare's time to cite the fierce opposition that the drama has encountered, or enumerate the obstacles that the dramatic artist must overcome.

"Let us remember, however, that the art has been sanctioned by the great, befriended by the good, and supported by the people; and, moreover, bear in mind that, in this profession, whose members are in the full blaze of public observation and scrutiny, who are too often censured without reason and condemned without excuse, who are too frequently judged as a class by the errors of individuals, those who *do* pass the fiery ordeal unscathed, who stand before us the real representatives of the dramatic profession, deserve from us our garlands as the exponents of a great and glorious art, and, upon the present occasion, more than that, — the high regard which genius, combined with nobleness of mind and purity of character, exacts from all true and honest hearts.

"We come here to-night to accord that homage which genius does not ask, but commands; to give you, not evidence of popularity, — mere popularity, — which is as the brightness of the passing meteor or the fleeting splendors of the rainbow, but to express our appreciation of true genius and the manifestation of genuine friendship.

"And in conclusion let me say, that though you may pass from the mimic stage, distant be the day when your exit shall be made from the great stage on which men and women all are merely players; though you may not have our hands in

future before the curtain, they will still cordially grasp yours in the social circle, which you adorn as modestly as you have upheld the dramatic art worthily and honorably; and now, when we depart, we shall each and all of us remember that, though

'Many the parts you played, yet to the end
Your best were those of sister, lady, friend.'"

Miss Cushman, with much emotion, replied as follows: —

"'The less I deserve,
The more merit lies in your bounty.'

"GENTLEMEN: Your unexpected kindness deprives me of all words in which to thank you, and the few I can find will be but poor and feeble expressions of what I feel. But I would beg you to believe all that the heart prompts, as my deep and earnest appreciation of the honor you have done me. It is especially grateful, because it comes to me here, in my own native city, and at the hands of those who, from the beginning to the end of my career, have been truly

'Brothers, friends, and countrymen.'

"In leaving the stage finally, it has always been my intention to make my last appearance in Boston; and this suggests to me a little explanation, which, with your permission, I would like to make on this occasion. It has been *implied*, if not declared, and repeated in the newspapers about the country, that I should not have appeared again upon the stage after the great ovation which was paid to me in New York. At least, so the gentlemen of the press decided, and many comments have been made upon me in the papers derogatory to my dignity as a woman and my position as an artist. I have passed on, in the even tenor of my way, little regarding, on my own account, these would-be censors and judges; but it seems to me proper that I should explain to *you*, in whose esteem I have a long-vested interest, which must not be endangered without a strong and earnest protest on my part, that, if my last engagement

in New York was announced as my farewell to the stage, it was done by no act or will or word of mine. I had no such intention; indeed, I could not have had; for I had already made many other engagements for the season, which I have been endeavoring to fulfil, concluding, as was always my dearest wish, here, in my own city of Boston, which I have always dearly loved, and where I would rather have been born than in any other spot of the habitable globe.

"I hope I have not tired your patience, but I could not rest without endeavoring to remove even the shadow of a shade which might cloud the perfect harmony between me and my public, who I hope and trust will accept this explanation from me. Looking back upon my career, I think I may, 'without vainglory,' say, that I have not by any act of my life done discredit to the city of my birth."

Then, turning to the gentlemen of the committee of presentation, Miss Cushman continued: —

"So now, with a full but more free heart, I revert to you. To this last beautiful manifestation of your good-will towards me, and to all who have so graciously interested themselves to do me this honor, I can but say, —

'More is their due
Than more than all can pay.

Believe me, I shall carry away with me into my retirement no memory sweeter than my associations with Boston and my Boston public.

"From my full heart, God bless you, and farewell."

The chronicle continues: —

"The curtain then fell and the audience departed. And thus was seen the last of the great artist in a sphere which she has so long and so well adorned. She has quitted it with, we hope, many years of life and happiness before her, to enjoy the repose she has so worthily earned. 'Hail, and farewell!'"

CHAPTER XIII.

"Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude."
Macbeth.

"Where words are scarce, they 're seldom spent in vain,
For they breathe truth, that breathe their words in pain."
Richard II.

AFTER the farewell in Boston on May 15, 1875, Miss Cushman went on a short reading-tour to Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse, Auburn, and Ithaca. On June 2d she read at Easton, Pennsylvania, and from there she went for a few days to Lenox, Massachusetts, where she was much interested in altering and furnishing a small cottage, to which she hoped to retreat in the late days of summer, when the damp heat of Newport became oppressive and baleful to her, and when a change from the sea to mountain air seemed desirable.

The pleasure and enjoyment she found in this small spot were delightful to see; all its appointments were of a simple, homely kind, which added the charm of contrast to the elegant attractions of her Newport home. She brought with her there the same simplicity of taste and adaptability to her surroundings which made for her a home wherever she might be. She always enjoyed a return to the modest housekeeping of her early days, when Sallie and herself used to rough it so contentedly together. Everything interested her, on the small scale

as on the large one; her mind was busy, active, suggestive, and full of purpose and energy. She had no room for petty cares or trivial conventionalities; she *made* her surroundings suitable and appropriate, and where she was, no one ever thought of anything else.

The little place would have been as complete in its way as the larger one if her life had been spared; but she was only permitted to enjoy a few days of it at this time, and again later in the season, a few weeks, after a long and severe illness at Newport, which for a time seemed to make it doubtful if she might ever see it again. Part of July and all of August she was prostrated by what seemed to be a kind of intermittent fever, with malarial symptoms, accompanied by aggravations of her especial malady, which made it a very suffering time. In the early part of September, however, she rallied again, and gained strength enough to make the journey to Lenox. There the fresh breezy air of the Berkshire hills, the mountain drives, and the short walks she was soon able to take, acted like a charm upon her, and speedily gave her back some measure of strength and appetite.

But, pleasant as she found it, here as always "a divided duty" was warring against the good influences about her. She had made up her mind to put herself again under special medical treatment, and on October 7th she returned to Boston for her last winter.

The last winter was passed at the Parker House, under medical treatment; bearing up steadfastly, enduring pain bravely and heroically, and finding her best relief in the giving out of herself for the help and comfort of others. How many will remember those days, who came to her with their sorrows and left her cheered, comforted, and instructed. Until within two days of her death she sent a daily bulletin of her condition, written

in pencil with her own hand to her family at Newport. This was her first act in the morning after taking her breakfast. The daily notes vary in character: sometimes hopeful, as a better day comes and the cheerful, sanguine nature gets a little lift; at others sad and depressed, but never failing in loving interest in whatever concerns the dear ones she watched over so tenderly. To the daily guests and intimate companions she was so generally cheerful, so forgot herself in the intellectual and social stimulus which she enjoyed and needed, that no one could dream of so sudden a departure. There were always anxious fears alternating with almost despairing hopes, but no anticipation of such a sudden loosening of the cords of so strong a life. Of those who had borne with her so long the "burden and heat of the day" all were so much under the influence of her brave spirit, that it was impossible to believe other than she did; and even so late as February 3d she speaks of the possibility of her yet going to California.

It was most merciful that such should be the case, for all about her loved her so they could not have borne up under the belief that she must soon go from them. It was a sufficiently heavy trial, — the long, long suspense, the aching sympathy, and pity so intense as to be almost unendurable. She was so sweet, so faithfully loving, so ready to accept whatever came of comfort or alleviation, so full of interest and bright intelligence, alive and awake to all the topics of the time, that her sick-room was the most interesting place in the world; and those whose privilege it was to find admission there sat lost in wondering love and reverent admiration.

On December 24th Miss Cushman writes more despondingly than usual, more freely of her sufferings; but, as usual, with the cry comes also the word of resignation.

"This is not the greeting you should have for your Christmas; but it is better you should know exactly where I am, and that we may have to defer the celebration of our Christmas to another and happier day. Just feel as though to-morrow was any common day, — for is not Christ here to us every day? And we will show our belief in this by trying to have faith and trust, and make the celebration of it when that trust and faith are borne out and justified by time! I grieve for you, dear, more than for myself, though I am a dreadful baby over my pain. It is very hard for you; but the hard places must come in our lives, and perhaps we should not know how to enjoy the pleasures, but for the corresponding gloom of the pains of life. Keep up a good heart. You are loved and thought of as you *would* be, and that must give you courage for the battle which is before you as before us all!"

In a letter written on Christmas day she says: —

"The doctor is very hopeful, and says I am better. When I hear him talk, I am ashamed that I give way under pain and cause such suffering to those who love me; but I cannot help it. It is beyond me, and those who love me must bear with me, and if I ever get well I will repay them with interest in mirthfulness and joy, until they shall wonder at the merry old woman! Your dear letter, with Nino's book-mark, so beautifully embroidered, and my darling big boy's beautiful letter and book-marker, all came to me last night and comforted me. I like the children to make me little bits of things rather than anything else. Give them my dear Christmas love and wishes. I will write to them before New Year's day. How did they like their presents? I hope well. This morning came Will's comfortable foot-rug; dear Ned's foot-muff, for carriage driving; your lovely head-dress, which I am disporting in a sort of mockery; it is too beautiful for such suffering as mine. My dear friend Annie S—— sent me a beautiful pot of carnations; L—— H—— a lovely china cup and saucer and plate. Sallie gave me a bowl which matched it perfectly. Mr. Parker

sent up an immense bunch of mistletoe, which I have distributed among my curious friends, where it will make fun. Mrs. C—— sends a crown and cross in immortelles; Mr. A——, a charming book of his wanderings in Egypt; Mr. T——, flowers; Mrs. H—— B——, flowers; indeed, I have not room to tell you all the kindness and good-will. Tell Will, with my dear love, that her little foot-rug comforts my feet at this moment; my foot-muff gazes at me with open mouth from the corner; my book-markers are on my photograph board. All are sweetly welcome and much prized."

A note from another hand, speaking of this time, is not so cheerful. She had been much more ill before Christmas, and had made her usual effort to be equal to the day and the occasion, as is evident in the foregoing letter. It says: —

"I could not write you a word of greeting for Christmas, because I could not do so cheerfully. You know how deep down in our slough of despond we have been, and it was as much as I could do to bear up for our daily needs. Yet I have been sustained by something above and beyond myself, else I could not have kept up. Now, this morning, I am glad to be able to send you a more hopeful word. I know so well what it is to be at a distance from those we love when they are suffering. I feel it even when I go into the streets here; the rush of life and health *hurts* in the ever-present thought of the dear and precious one alone and in pain. I hurry back to her, finding my only comfort in the nearness, and in the small, *small* ways wherein I can try to be of help and comfort. Your letter of last night made me feel how much more happy I am than you, in possessing this privilege, and I felt the need of telling you my sympathy.

"We have had a pleasant Christmas within, though gray and dismal without; all our little gifts are placed about, and look lovely; my heavenly blue jacket seems to hold out its arms to me, full of celestial influences. Thank the dear little

boys for me for their pretty gifts. I wish I were a fairy godmother for their sakes. The room is quite a bower with flowers and Christmas greens; the mantel and every available place is adorned with charming little things, and our dear one has been pleased and happy in them. You will see by all this that the good genius of Christmas has not forsaken us yet; and you will be pleased to know that flowers and pleasant things can yet find an echo in our souls."

Early in January Miss Cushman's sufferings were much aggravated, and for a time she seemed to be running down rapidly: appetite and sleep failed, and hope and trust almost departed; our hearts were heavy indeed. It was at this time that she made all the arrangements which were afterwards carried out for her funeral services, naming those whom she wished to be pall-bearers, and fixing upon King's Chapel for her burial-services. With all her own calm forethought she entered minutely into the details, which seemed afterwards most providential, because, when the event really came, it was so comparatively sudden that there was no opportunity for such instructions. She had already purchased and prepared a plot at Mount Auburn, rejoicing much, when she visited it for the first time, that it commanded a view of "dear Boston," and talking over its site and its beauty with a cheerful brightness peculiarly her own.

After this she again rallied, and was so much better for several weeks that hope again sprang up in our hearts.

In a letter as late as January 27th, alluding to a friend's sorrows she writes: —

"Ah, I am ashamed of the outcry I have made over mere physical pain, when the world is so full of 'carking care,' which corrodes the soul! God forgive me for fretting and complaining. I have not known what else to do, and impotence is *my* curse and cross. Ah, please his infinite mercy

that I am ever *well* again, will we not be happy and good, and love him more and more day by day?"

In another letter of the 30th she writes:—

"I hardly think you or any one dream how I love those dear children; how my own belongings make up my world of love and faith. The rest of the world are more or less agreeable, as givers-out or recipients, and so are more or less acceptable. I am sympathetic, and so more a lover of my kind than most people; hence I must *see* people, and it is useless to attempt to box me up. I cannot be saved in this respect, and it is folly to try."

This is in reference to well-meant but mistaken endeavors to save her from some of the fatigues to which she subjected herself by the social influences she drew about her. More than ever in her decline was she attractive and fascinating. The light burned more and more brightly as it approached its extinction, and every moment she could give to the friends who surrounded her, and were only too happy to sit at her feet, was absorbed and enjoyed to the utmost.

From a letter of February 4th I take an extract referring to Miss Cushman's life and surroundings at this time.

"We were hoping that this morning would bring us a letter from you; but since it has not, the next best thing is to send you one on this good day which keeps us in and other people *out*, for it is snowing. Old winter has been trying again to be winterly, and has deposited snow to about the depth of five inches. The pigeons and sparrows are somewhat inconvenienced by it: the former, because they sink into it, being round and fat with much feeding; and the latter, whose light weight enables them to hop over it, because the bread thrown to them drops down beneath the surface. One large piece of roll made a sort of well in the snow, deep enough to ingulf two small sparrows at once. C—— lies in her bed in the morning and

looks out upon the opposite roof where we feed the creatures, and the first thing that must be done is to give them their breakfast, for which they are always waiting. They are so tame now, that when the expected meal is delayed they crowd the window-sill, and as the morning sun pours into these windows they are pleasant objects, with their burnished necks and bright glancing eyes.

"I promised once to give you a description of our sitting-room; it has four windows in it, looking towards the southeast and north; those on the north have double glass, and the southern ones admit the morning sun in floods up to twelve o'clock. The prospect from these windows is not at all ugly; it is open, and commands a view of some fine buildings. Opposite, on the north, is the City Hall, a handsome building, very bright and cheery at night, when its windows are all lighted up. It has a large and spacious courtyard with grass plots and large trees, and on one side is a very good bronze statue of Franklin, who stands with his cocked hand under his arm, and has on at this moment a hood and cape of snowy white, in which he looks very funny. Next to the City Hall comes in well the gable-end of King's Chapel, one of the oldest churches in Boston, with a steep slate roof and a projecting semicircular bit at the end, with a sloping roof of its own, where our pigeons sit and sun and plume themselves, and where they apparently belong. All over the wall are vines, now leafless, where the sparrows haunt and keep up an endless twitter. The windows toward the southeast look over the roofs of the meaner buildings, and command a view of the new Boston post-office, which has a sufficiently massive and varied outline to be quite picturesque. In this direction there are other fine distant buildings, many steeples, and a perfect forest of vanes, which light up in a wonderful manner in the setting sunlight. You perhaps will care more for the inside than the outside of our room; so I must turn your attention inward. In one corner is the writing-table, and over it hangs the frame of photographs, a contrivance of C——'s own, being

and sweet and touching with the heartfelt feeling which surrounded her always, and found deeper and more spontaneous expression after her death. The flowers that she loved covered her, — children's hands laid them upon her coffin; above her head, the inscription on the chancel wall — "This is my commandment unto you, that ye love one another" — seemed to be speaking to all the lesson of her life, and to be drawing all, with still greater force than even her living presence had done, into the magic circle of "peace and good will."

All that was mortal of Charlotte Cushman rests beneath the sod at Mount Auburn, but no one who ever knew *her* can think of her as there. Our spirits do not seek her in the dust; no thought of her can ever be associated with the grave; and so our hearts are not cast down, but only elevated by the thought that she has escaped the bondage and sufferings of the flesh, and is rising ever "upward and onward."

"Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul,
Descend to contemplate
The form that once was dear!
The spirit is not there
Which kindled that dead eye,
Which throbbed in that cold heart,
Which in that motionless hand
Once met thy friendly grasp.
The spirit is not there!
Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul,
Follow thy friend beloved;
The spirit is not there!

* * *

But in the lonely hour,
But in the evening walk,
Think that she companies thy solitude;
Think that she holds with thee
Mysterious intercourse!
And though remembrance wake a tear,
There will be joy in grief."

SOUTHEY.

CHAPTER XIV.

TRIBUTES TO HER MEMORY.

"Close up his eyes and draw the curtain close,
And let us all to meditation."

Henry VI.

FROM among the warm and spontaneous tributes which were called forth by her death, many are worthy to be rescued from the ephemeral life of the newspaper and find a more permanent record here. There was something very remarkable and deeply touching in the unanimity, the earnestness, and the respect with which the press of the entire country bore witness to her greatness and laid their tributes upon her tomb. Rarely has it been given to one individuality to call forth so wide and heartfelt a recognition. Touched by death's magic alchemy, whatever remnant of human misjudgment, prejudice, or ignorance still lingered, marring the perfect image of her fame, vanished away, leaving the virgin gold tried in the furnace of affliction and purified until it reflected God's image to speak only its true and perfect lesson.

Even the old accusation, that she made too many farewells, is gently and kindly lifted from her memory by the hand of her true friend and lover, William Winter. In the notice from which we quote farther on he says: —

"It is not difficult to understand when we consider that Miss Cushman was a woman of weird genius, sombre imagination, and great sensibility, that for her conscientious mind and highly nervous organization the practice of the dramatic art was terribly earnest; and that frequently she was the victim of disease, in which way she often came to believe that the limit of her labor was reached, that the end of her life was near, and that her retirement from the public view was needful. With natures that see widely and feel deeply, such despondent views of personal destiny and worldly affairs are not unusual. Thackeray, long before he wrote 'The Newcomes,' said of himself that his work was done, and he should accomplish no more. In the several farewells that she took of the stage Miss Cushman acted like a woman, and precisely like the woman she was. All of her adieus were sincere. None of them, till now, were final or possible. Let us bring to the coffin of this great genius, dead and at rest after such trials and such anguish, not only the gentleness of charitable judgment, but the justice of intelligent appreciation."

On the Sunday following the funeral the Rev. Henry W. Foote of King's Chapel preached a memorial sermon, taking for his text these excellent words: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians iv. 8.)

"In these wonderful words of an apostle," he said, "we have the Christian warrant that whatever brings beauty and graciousness into our human life is a power for good in human character. My purpose now is to call your attention to the fact that in the same group with what may be called the seven virtues of the gospel is a distinct recognition of what may be called the gentle aspects of life. Side by side with the things

of truth, honesty, justice, purity, are 'whatsoever things are lovely and of good report.' I take the words as a recognition among the forces of Christianity, not only of moral loveliness, but also of those forms of beauty and power which appeal through the æsthetic sense to the soul. They seem to declare not only that religion is not hostile to these things, but that it is able to make them helpful to itself. They would show art has a consecrated function to fulfil. . . . .

"The only true theory of art is this, that its function is to create beauty and power, and to make that beauty and power bear upon the human soul. But what kind of beauty? Let Raphael answer, writing to a friend: 'As I have not under my eyes any model which satisfies me, I make one of a certain ideal of beauty which I find in my soul.' Let Michael Angelo answer in the words of one of his majestic sonnets: 'Expanding her wings to rise toward the heaven whence she descended, the soul does not linger on the beauty which entices the eye, and which is as frail as it is treacherous; but she seeks in her sublime flight to attain the principle of universal beauty.' And then she seeks to bring this principle to bear upon the elevation of human character through its refining and quickening influences. This, and nothing less than this, is the view which Christianity would take of those great persuasive, attractive forces which so enrich and beautify modern life. It would bid them use their opportunities as ministering handmaids 'at the gate of the temple called Beautiful,' so that it shall be easier for men to enter in by them to the Temple itself. . . . .

"Many among you, my hearers, are making an application which is naturally suggested by these thoughts. The remarkable manifestation of public sorrow which was seen in this church six days ago, thronging not only this house of prayer, but the ways around it, and yonder hill of the dead, with multitudes in every condition of life, drawn by a like sympathetic feeling, not merely of a common admiration for a genius that had dazzled and delighted them, but of appreciation of a noble

and generous character, — that general outpouring seems to give the keynote for our thoughts. Others have spoken, and will speak, of the light of genius which shone with strong and vivid glow on so many thousands of the English-speaking race. Many here will long remember the hospitalities which welcomed them in the ancient city by the Tiber, and filled its classic spaces with kind and modern friendliness. Those whom the ties of friendship bound to her with peculiar strength, by the magnetism of a large and forceful nature, by gratitude for innumerable acts of generous thought which took shape in effective deed, will feel that the world has lost much of its light for them. And in this community, to which she belonged, and whose best characteristics were deeply impressed upon her character, there will seem a special fitness that her earthly life closed in her native place, which was ever near her heart. I cannot doubt that some fitting memorial services will hereafter be held to give expression to all these. But in this sacred place (which she herself chose for these last offices, perhaps because it is wellnigh the most characteristic thing of the Boston that she loved) it is alone fitting to dwell on the moral and religious lessons which always comfort us in the presence of death, which comfort us with special earnestness when we see them illustrated in a noble character, and shining the more brightly against the earthly shadows which fall around the close of a remarkable career.

"I have spoken in the beginning of this discourse of the pure, true function of consecrated art. . . . . The principles which lie at the heart of this spirit of true art are much more close than we are apt to think to the common life of us all. . . . . So it follows that, in a sense, the true theory of life is to consider it as an art; and the true art of life is to interpret God's purpose of what it should be in noble and worthy treatment of it. The first necessity of true art is this, — that it must follow a high ideal; and none ever accomplished this without having the eye fixed on an ideal always higher, never attained, but shining like a guiding star.

"And here that gifted woman, who has done so much to show our time how a vocation which is beset with peculiar difficulties and temptations may be filled in a lofty spirit, may well teach us how near the true spirit of art is to Christianity. When we see that one has lived on this earth in whom the ideal of truth and love and goodness is made real, we may well recognize that Christ's coming answers the soul's longing by giving to it the type of a perfection toward which it is to strive for ever and ever.

"There was a time when the world sneered at the possibility of virtue in dramatic life, and by the sneer, and what went with it, did its worst to make virtue impossible. But it has been given to our generation to show, in lives among which happily our noble townswoman does not stand alone, that a pure spirit can go stainless, as the lady in Milton's 'Comus,' through corruptions. In one of those solemn hours, when the soul looks back on the past to read its lessons, she said, not long before her death, to one for whom she could draw aside the veil of her thoughts: 'I have tried to live honestly; I have tried to show women that it was possible to live a pure, noble life.' Let women and men be thankful that she succeeded greatly, that society is purer, that the tone of that which has sometimes been one of the most demoralizing, and which can be one of the most helpful public influences, has been elevated in no small degree by her example. One great secret of the public power of that woman of genius, whose memory is with you to-day, was, that she lived with the great thoughts which she interpreted until they were her very self and she was they. Those who knew her best, best knew how the masters of thought were guests at home in her mind. It was but a few hours before she died that she bade a friend read to her the grand poem of 'Columbus,' by one of our own poets; and when in the dim light her friend failed to read some words aright, the mind, clear and strong as ever, set her right from her unfailing memory. . . . .

"What way shall I live? What shall I do? These are

the questions which lie at the base of all true living, alike for the peerless genius and for us all. The things which are lovely must be imperishably intertwined with those which are true and honest, just and pure, for they come from Him who is perfect beauty and perfect truth."

On the same day the Rev. Dr. Bartol preached a sermon on the "Pulpit and the Stage," in which he brought together the names of Charlotte Cushman and Horace Bushnell. After contrasting the two in their different and seemingly widely differing rôles, he proceeds to show how they approximate in *the motive* which swayed them in their separate avocations, how they meet in the way either was pursued.

"Both Charlotte Cushman as an actress and Horace Bushnell as a preacher cultivated the capacity of appropriating to themselves what they saw moral and lovely in others, and they reaped the proper fruit to nourish themselves and others.

"The heavenly grace and human strength were doubtless fused together in both, and the stage, I think, should be more proud of the conduct than even of the unmatched achievement of its American queen and pattern in every way. Was aught left for her of the hag in Meg Merrilies, or of horror in Dickens's Nancy Sykes? The impersonation of these parts was clear and sweet, in perfect balance, without one gaping defect or eccentric fault. A born princess, she was native to command. A wave of influence, as from a magnetic battery to a company holding hands, swept from her, and laid on the thousands in the assembly she acted or read to one hushing spell. She had what the French historian attributes to Cæsar, — *charm*. It was moral grandeur in and through the artist's gift.

> 'What majesty is in her gait? Remember
> If e'er thou look'dst on majesty.'

And whoever listened to or conversed with Charlotte Cushman had a sense of something unaffectedly imperial in her port and style. With one comprehensive and swift-revolving glance how she gathered her audience in; with a single persuasive smile how she melted them! Her magnificent presence answering to the proportions of the largest buildings, her cathedral voice, that could make of any hall a whispering-gallery, all the instruments and tools of her art down to the color on her face and neck, how masterly! But the irreproachable woman, the soul intangible with evil, the generous nature, contributed how much! Humanity responded to one unsurpassably humane. A true and quite un-Romish catholic, she embraced all; nothing in her race too low for her fellowship or too high for her reach. She was of no creed or particular church, but a worshipper in every sanctuary, a sympathizer with every votary, a believer in the divine unity, and a hoper for immortality. Who may part or put asunder what God hath joined together? She made the connection of genius and virtue.

"In my two illustrations of to-day, pulpit and stage, actor and preacher, the power was as manifest as the skill. Both had alike, not only in their mode of communication the circle of beauty, but in the substance of demeanor the indomitable and rectilinear will. The circle was so large, it was the right line of heaven and earth; and to preachers and actors I commend them as models which to copy is equally blessed and safe. They alike united personal independence with the most gracious salute. Stepping to the footlights to rebuke insolence in the house, writing a public letter to resist philanthropic blackmail, insisting on justice to others as to herself behind the scenes, a pattern of artists in every sort, — Miss Cushman showed always the resolution with which, when her voice failed for music, she strode upon the stage. Conservative in her stand, a lover of the old ways and solemn forms of worship, yet from any one taking a different position she claims the honor due to her own unbounded tolerance, charity, and

liberty of thought. So Dr. Bushnell, as a preacher, signalized a singular consonance with our actor's unequivocal stamp; as in the labor of their several provinces and professions they were alike untiring, and neither could carry off from the other the palm, while in an obsequious, superficial, and dissipated age both held the standard of courageous diligence aloft.

"To the soul, nothing is gone. Love has no past. Said to me her nearest companion: 'I must speak of Miss Cushman in the present tense.' Never more than in her was expressed the power to live and be herself despite sickness and distress. The whole of Charlotte Cushman could live and act in the least remnant of her bodily strength. Eye and voice are last to go; they remain and haunt us still."

From the New York Tribune's obituary notice, in which we recognize the effort of one of the most kindly, true-hearted, and intelligent critics known to the press of this country, — William Winter, — I select the following: —

"There is something so awfully impressive in the vanishing of a great genius and a great force of noble intellect and character out of this world, that reverence must pause before the spectacle, no less in humanity than in sorrow. The historian of our time will review many important and significant lives, and will lay the laurel upon many a storied tomb; but he will honor no genius more stately or more singular than that which now sleeps in the coffin of Charlotte Cushman. It is difficult, if not impossible, at once to do justice to such a life. The end, which came yesterday in Boston, though not unexpected, was sudden; and it comes upon the mind with a solemn force that prompts to silent thought and fond remembrance more than to words. The future will speak of Charlotte Cushman with pride and gladness; the present can only tell her story in the quiet accents of grief.

"Only twenty days ago, in her room at the Parker House, Boston, she spoke with cheerful confidence of her anticipated restoration to health. Her eyes were bright, her voice was

firm, though suffused in every tone with an unconscious sadness most deeply touching and quite indescribable, and her noble countenance indicated such a vitality as it seemed impossible that death could conquer. To the last she was an image of majesty. The pain that consumed her suffering body could never quell her royal spirit. She could look back upon a good life; she was sustained by religious faith; she felt upon her gray hair the spotless crown of honor; she met death as she had met life, a victor; and she has passed from the world with all the radiance of her glory about her, like sunset from a mountain peak, that vanishes at once into the heavens.

"The greatness of Charlotte Cushman was that of an exceptional, because grand and striking personality, combined with extraordinary power to embody the highest ideals of majesty, pathos, and appalling anguish. She was not a great actress merely, but she was a great woman. She did not possess the dramatic faculty apart from other faculties, and conquer by that alone; but having that faculty in almost unlimited fulness, she poured forth through its channel such resources of character, intellect, moral strength, soul, and personal magnetism as marked her for a genius of the first order, while they made her an irresistible force in art. When she came upon the stage she filled it with the brilliant vitality of her presence. Every movement that she made was winningly characteristic. Her least gesture was eloquence. Her voice, which was soft or silvery, or deep or mellow, according as emotion affected it, used now and then to tremble, and partly to break, with tones that were pathetic beyond description. These were denotements of the fiery soul that smouldered beneath her grave exterior, and gave irridescence to every form of art that she embodied. Sometimes her whole being seemed to become petrified in a silent suspense more thrilling than any action, as if her imagination were suddenly inthralled by the tumult and awe of its own vast perceptions.

"As an actress, Miss Cushman was best in tragedy, whether

flush or grow pale, and pain would for a moment cloud her eyes or make her shiver; but not one word of it would she say, and directly would go on in the old brave, cheerful way. It was admirable, but infinitely touching. Miss Cushman possessed in a remarkable degree the power of attaching women to her. They loved her with utter devotion, and she repaid their love with the wealth of her great warm heart; young girls gave her genuine hero-worship, which she received with a gracious kindness, that neither encouraged the worship nor wounded the worshipper; mature women loved and trusted her wholly to the last hour of her life. She had the perfect service of the purest friendship, and beyond that, numbers of noble women waiting to give and receive unfailing sympathy and affection. Miss Cushman's triumphs have been great; but the greatest of these was the character that won such friends. Laurels for the actress will lie thick upon her grave, but they will be wet with the tears of those who mourn for the loving friend, the heroic woman."

The New York Evening Post enshrines her memory in words "fit though few."

"All lovers of the dramatic art will be pained to learn that one of its greatest interpreters in the present era, Charlotte Cushman, has passed away; and their sorrow will be shared by every man and woman who reveres high purpose and indomitable force of will for its own sake.

"Charlotte Cushman was something more than a remarkable actress; her public career was merely the mirror in which the strong features of her private character appeared as reflected images; and many a fainting spirit has doubtless drawn fresh strength from her example as a woman, to whom the privilege of witnessing her impersonations on the stage has been denied.

"Her native virtues will keep her memory fragrant, and coming generations will know her as one who carried a lofty ideal in her mind, and lived up to it; who never sacrificed

principle to gain; whose faith in God and herself yielded not under the weight of many years and discouraging vicissitudes, and who has left as a legacy to her multitude of friends a reputation free from those moral blemishes which too often accompany intellectual eminence."

Miss Cushman's neighbor and warm friend, Mr. George H. Calvert of Newport, lays this tribute upon her tomb: —

"The death of Miss Cushman leaves a throne empty in histrionic art, and at the same time makes a deep gloomy chasm in a very wide circle of friendship. To be at once admired, esteemed, honored, and beloved, is a rare fortune for one individual; it denotes an abundant and gifted organization. The high-souled, commanding queen on the stage was in private most affectionate, most tender, most sympathetic.

"Out of the richness of her nature came the manifold sympathies that made her so great in public, so warmly welcome, so devotedly cherished, in private. How animating, how cheering, to see her enter a room! Her presence was an impulsion to the best wheels of one's mind. It was at once an invitation and a stimulant,— that powerful countenance in which was the beauty of nobleness and intellectual superiority! Her talk, like her life, moved on a high plane; petty things and offences, touched upon for their significance, were too small for the strong, clean grasp of her mind. Doing noble, generous acts herself, she liked to talk of others who had done them, and she had a quick insight into pretenders and sophists.

"Capable, and aiming to seize principles, she readily engaged in discussion of them, whether political, ethical, or æsthetic. With great capacity and fluency of talk, she was a good listener, and had an open ear for wit and fun. The hearty ring of her laugh will long be a pleasant memory to her friends. The circle of her friends was unusually wide and various, her large soul had room for so much; and such was its truth and fidelity and fascination, that the nearer you came to her the dearer she was; those loved her most who knew her best.

Of the chief mourners for her loss, it is a precious privilege that to them it is given to shed the warmest tears for such a being. In their memory she will dwell a beneficent presence, and in their hearts a purifying love, ever dropping balm in regrets."

Mrs. Julia Ward Howe writes to the "Woman's Journal":—

"The curtain drops upon a vanished majesty. One who trod the boards in all the queendom of the drama will do so no more. Sorrow rises up between us and the vision of hours consumed with the high interest of classic personations. Thespis is perhaps the most pathetic of the muses, when she is pathetic. She cannot stay to mourn, but gathers up her trailing robes and hides her tears behind the mask of Fancy. But she and her ministers should have been sad at heart on the day when a name so honored and so dear as that of Charlotte Cushman was answered on the roll-call by the silence of death.

"The question here arises, — Is it a true majesty, that of the stage? Is it a poor mimic and mockery of the majesty which dwells in palaces and commands the ministry of art instead of furnishing it? We should say, on the contrary, that, as the representative of human fate and feeling, the majesty of the drama has a grandeur and a permanence which that of the palace only attains by rare and unaccustomed merit. The grandeur of a human life is such that adventitious circumstances do not really heighten it, though to our short-sighted gaze they seem to do so. Theories of society have changed since Shakespeare's day, and we of to-day may be inclined to alter a word in his well-known line and say, —

'There 's a *vulgarity* doth hedge a king,' —

the vulgarity of adulation, which the sincerer public of the theatre cannot offer, because nature will not allow it to do so. No æsthetic crown is loftier than that of the artist who has

worthily walked in this true majesty of life upon the scene, receiving at every step the tribute of grateful and admiring hearts.

"Our friend had this true crowning. When we recall her form and action, we must rehearse the lines of Elizabeth Browning: —

'Juno, where is now the glory
Of thy regal port and tread?
Will they lay, forevermore, thee
In thy strait, low, golden bed?
Will thy queendom all lie hid
Meekly under either lid?'

But the crown of all crowns is that of *character*, and in this respect our friend's record does not belie her broad brow and generous smile. Laborious, faithful, affectionate, tender, her daily life fulfilled all that her art-prophecies promised. Rich were they who dwelt within the cordial influence of her words and acts. Bright and sunny was the home which her presence illuminated. Distant friends turned towards her with loving memory, and those who needed and deserved friendship found it in her.

"So let our tributes to her memory be *heart tributes* all. She loved much, served much, earned by hard work a noble reputation, and has left an example in which her race is enriched."

On behalf of the profession, of which he is an esteemed member, Mr. Lawrence Barrett has recorded in a few fervent words this "Tribute to Charlotte Cushman's Memory": —

"Charlotte Cushman is dead. Before the shock of this news has passed away it cannot be improper to recall to her professional brethren the great loss we sustain by this sudden departure. After a long life of toil, laden with years and honors, she sleeps at last. That crown which she has worn for so many years undisputed now lies upon a coffin beside which a whole nation will mourn. The world contained no

greater spirit, no nobler woman. Her genius filled the world with admiration, and the profession which she adorned and ruled must long await her successor. This is not the place, nor is mine the pen, to write her history; larger space and abler hands will see that duty performed. These lines are traced by one who loved her living and weeps for her now dead. Her career is an incentive and an example to all the workers in our noble art. A woman of genius, industrious and religious, her best education was obtained within the circle of her calling. Almost masculine in manner, there was yet a gentleness in her which only her intimates could know. The voice which crooned the lullaby of the Bertrams so touchingly came from a heart as gentle as infancy. To all who labor in the realms of art, and to my profession most especially, the loss of this day will be a severe one. Bigotry itself must stand abashed before the life of our dead queen, whose every thought and act were given for years to an art which ignorance and envy have battled against in vain for centuries. To her, our queen, we say, 'Peace and farewell!' We shall not look upon her like again.

"LAWRENCE BARRETT.

"NEW YORK, February 18, 1876."

These are but a few of the public expressions of universal regret and admiration; private utterances to the same effect were many and heartfelt. We may fitly close our record with this tender and touching tribute from her friend, H. H.

CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

I.

But yesterday it was. Long years ago
It seems. The world so altered looks to-day
That, journeying idly with my thoughts astray,
I gazed where rose one lofty peak of snow
Above grand tiers on tiers of peaks below.
One moment brief it shone, then sank away,
As swift we reached a point where foot-hills lay

So near they seemed like mountains huge to grow
And touch the sky. That instant, idly still,
My eye fell on a printed line, and read
Incredulous, with sudden anguished thrill,
The name of this great queen among the dead.
I raised my eyes. The dusty foot-hills near
Had gone. Again the snowy peak shone clear.

II.

O thou beloved woman, soul and heart
And life, thou standest unapproached and grand,
As still that glorious snowy peak doth stand.
The dusty barrier our clumsy art
In terror hath called Death holds thee apart
From us. 'T is but the low foot-hill of sand
Which bars our vision in a mountain-land.
One moment farther on, and we shall start
With speechless joy to find that we have passed
The dusky mound which shut us from the light
Of thy great love, still quick and warm and fast,
Of thy great strengths, heroically cast,
Of thy great soul, still glowing pure and white,
Of thy great life, still pauseless, full, and bright!

INDEX.

Actors and actresses, false impressions concerning, 144, 145.
"Adventurers," Puritan emigrants so called in England, 3.
"Advertiser," Boston, obituary notice of Miss Cushman, 297.
Akers, Paul, description of Page's portrait of Miss Cushman, 92.
Allerton, Mary, wife of Thomas Cushman, 6; last survivor of "Mayflower" Pilgrims, 7.
America, emigration of Cushman family to, in 1620, 3.
America, Mr. Grattan's book on, 36.
Antonio, Miss Cushman's major-domo, 118.
Arcadian Club, testimonial presented by, 262, 263.
Art, dramatic, eulogised by Miss Cushman, 142.
"Atlantic Monthly," quotation from, 206–206.
Atlantic, the, Miss Cushman's voyages across, 39–44.
Autograph-hunting, 157.

Bartol, Rev. Dr., extracts from his sermon on "The Pulpit and the Stage," 292–297.
Babbit, Augustus, interest of, in Miss Cushman's education, 15.
Babbit family, sketch of, 9.
Barrett, Lawrence, engagement of, to act with his company, 245; tribute to Miss Cushman, 303.
Beethoven, his bust by Mathieu, 207.
"Behind the scenes," 145, 147, 150.
Bellows, Rev. Henry W., correspondence relative to donations to Sanitary Commission, 185–187.
Blagden, Miss Isa, 125, 126.
Blanc, Louis, 57.
Bonheur, Rosa, a visit to her studio, 166, 167.
Booth, Edwin, acts with Miss Cushman, 61.
Booth's Theatre, farewell engagement in, 256; last appearance in, 263–264.
Boston, farewell performance in, 271–275.
Bowery Theatre, burning of, 27.
Bradford, Governor, friendship of, with Cushman family, 4, 6.
Braham, Mr., remarks on "Meg Merrilies," 149.
Brattleboro', Vt., a winter visit to, 235, 236.
Brewster, Elder, associated with Robert Cushman in 1620, 3.
Brooks, Phillips, opinion of dramatic reading, 246.
Brown, Dr. John, 127.
Browning, Mrs., 170.
Browning, Robert, quotation from "Paracelsus," 43; "Saul," 197.
Brownings, the, 125, 126.
Bryant, William Cullen, 259, 262.
Bude (England), description of, 209.
"Bushie," 121–124, 126, 127.
Bushnell, Rev. Horace, parallel between his character and Miss Cushman's, 292–297.

Calvert, George H., tribute to Miss Cushman's memory, 299.
Campagna di Roma, description of, 131–137.
Carlyle, Thomas, 84, 85.
Carlyle, Mrs., 84, 85, 160.
Charity, unreasonable requests in cause of, commented on by Miss Cushman, 155–157.
Childhood, records of Miss Cushman's, 13–18.
Children, her love of, 170–172.
Chorley, Henry F., letters from, 68–72, 99, 100; play written by, 70, 91.
Christmas letters and gifts, 279–281.

Climate, Roman, its effect on health, 172–174.
Closel, Madame, 23.
"Columbus," the poem of, 284.
Cook, Miss Eliza, 37.
Crow, Miss, her marriage to E. C. Cushman, 162.
Cushman, Charlotte, birth, ancestry, and family, 2–12. Early recollections, 12–15, 19–22. First performance of Lady Macbeth, 22. Engagement at Bowery Theatre, 26, 27; at Park Theatre, 31, 32. On board the "Garrick," 39–44. In Scotland, 44. First London engagement, 46–58. Letters from Miss Cushman, 47–50. Her earnestness, 56, 240. The Cushman sisters as Romeo and Juliet, 58–60. Comments of the press, 60–63. In Dublin, 64–67; Switzerland, 69. Letters to a young friend, 79–83. In Rome, 91. Page's portrait, 92. In England — letter to Mrs. Muspratt on death of her child, 94. The London home, 96. Through the provinces, 98. In Rome — first acquaintance with Miss Stebbins, 100. Personal appearance, 101, 102. Kindness and benevolence of, 103–105, 146, 147. Musical ability, 105–108. The apartments in Rome, 112–116. Letters from Miss Peabody, 139. Incident at McVicker's Theatre, 146, 147. Meg Merrilies, 147–152. Letter upon charities, 155. Death of Mrs. Muspratt, 159. Bust by Miss Stebbins, 161. Letters from England, 163–166. Letter from Paris, 166. Enjoyment of French stage, 168, 169. Love of children, 170–172. Religious views, 177–184. Interest in Sanitary Commission, 185–187. Letters from Rome, 192–196. Death of Mrs. Cushman, 208. First appearance of malady, 229. Advice of physicians, 230. Return to America, 232. Letter on dedication of the Cushman School, 237. Engagement at Booth's Theatre, N. Y., 237, 241, 242. Western tour, 243. Reading at Narragansett, 244. Illness at the South, 245. Letters from Newport, 246–251. Letters from the West, 252–255. Farewell to New York, 258–265. Farewell to Philadelphia, 265–267. Readings — illness in Cincinnati, 267. Farewell to Boston, 271–275. Last winter in Boston, 277. Letters from Parker House, Boston, 279–284. Death, 284. Funeral ceremonies, 285, 286.
Cushman, Elkanah, 7.
Cushman, Mrs., death of, 208.
Cushman, Robert, 2–5.
Cushman, Susan, letter relating to, 36; acts with her sister, 58–60, 63; marries Dr. Muspratt, 68, 90; death of her child, 94, 95; illness and death of, 159.
Cushman, Thomas, 5, 6.
Cushman School, the, 237–241.

Dante, Longfellow's translation of, 198.
Death and burial, Miss Cushman's, 284–286.
Dickens, Charles, 154.
Disappointment in early life, letter referring to, 182–184.
Dramatic characters, principal, performed by Miss Cushman — Bianca, 51–53; Mrs. Haller, 26, 32; Hamlet, 216, 217; Lady Macbeth, 23, 25, 215; Meg Merrilies, 78, 148–153; Nancy Sykes, 154; Queen Katharine, 71, 73, 215; Romeo, 59–63; Rosalind, 54–56.
Dramatic readings, 211. "King Henry VIII.," 212; "Macbeth," 215; "Lady of Shalott," 219; "Skeleton in Armor," 220; "Battle of Ivry," 221; Browning's poems, 222–228; "Death of the Old Squire," 224, 225. Remarkable successes, 236, 242, 245, 246.
Dublin, her engagement there, 65–67.
Dudevant, Madame Aurore. *See* George Sand.

Earnestness, the secret of Miss Cushman's success, 56, 240.
England, feeling in, as to war in America, 163.
"Evening Post" (New York), obituary notice of Miss Cushman in, 298.

Farewell appearances, explanation of, 233.
Faucit, Miss Helen, 45, 54, 110.
"Fazio," Milman's, Miss Cushman's acting in, 51–53.
Fields, James T., 247.
Foote, Rev. Henry W., sermon on death of Miss Cushman, 288.
Forrest, Edwin, 46.
Fox-hunting, 182, 183.

"Garrick," voyage in the, 39–44.
Genealogical records of Cushman family, 1–7.
Gilbert, John, visit from, at Newport, 250, 251.
Girlhood, records of Miss Cushman's, 12–19.
Gounod, sacred songs by, 108.
Greenwood, Grace, travels with, in Italy, 91.
Grattan, Thomas Colley, letters from, 33–37; work on America by, 36.
Gutekunst, photograph by, 92.

Handel and Haydn Society, Miss Cushman's bust presented to, 161.
Harrowgate, a summer in, 196, 197.
H. H., poem on death of Miss Cushman by, 301.
Hosmer, Miss Harriet, Miss Cushman visits Rome with, 91.
Howe, Mrs. Julia Ward, tribute to Miss Cushman by, 300.

Illness, final, 281 - 285.
Ingelow, Jean, her poems, 197.
Irish songs, 106, 107; stories, 64 - 66.
Italian servants, 116 - 119.

Jackson, Mrs. Helen Hunt. *See* H. H.
Jewsbury, Miss, letters from, 74 - 78.

Kemble, Charles, 88.
King's Chapel, chosen for her obsequies, 281; funeral service and sermon in, 285, 288 - 292.
Knowles, James Sheridan, his opinion of Miss Cushman's acting, 63.

Lady Macbeth, first performance of, 22.
Lanier, Sidney, poems addressed to Miss Cushman, 268, 269.
Lardner, Dr., correspondence with, 33.
Lenox, Mass., her home in, 276.
Lincoln, Abraham, 195, 196.
Lippincott, Mrs. *See* Grace Greenwood.
London, her success in, 87 - 89; home in, 96.
Longfellow, Henry W., extract from "Hyperion," 43; translation of Dante, 198; "Skeleton in Armor," 220.
Lover, Samuel, comic song by, 106.
Lowell, James Russell, poem of "Columbus," 284.

Macbeth, Lady, selected for Miss Cushman's début as actress, 22.
Macdonald, George, meeting with, in England, 209; his opinion of dramatic reading, 246, 247.
Macready, William, acts with Miss Cushman, 30, 32; invites her to act in Paris, 45; his farewell benefit, 73.
Maeder, James G., instructor of Miss Cushman in singing, 22.
Malvern, a favorite resort, 75.
Marcy, Governor, 28.
Marryatt, Captain, friendship for Miss Cushman, 29, 30.
Mathieu, Wilhelm, his works purchased by Miss Cushman for Music Hall, 205.
"Mayflower," the, 3, 4.
McVicker's Chicago Theatre, presentation of testimonial to Miss Cushman by performers, 146, 147.
Mercer, Sallie, character of, 37 - 39; economies of, 45; her care of Miss Cushman, 286.
Mount Auburn, monument to be erected in, 231; purchase of plot in, 281.
Mozart, his bust by Mathieu, 206.
Music Hall, inauguration of organ, 188; presentation of brackets and busts, 204 - 208.
Muspratt, Ida, letter on death of, 94, 95.
Muspratt, Dr. J. Sheridan, 68, 90.
Muspratt, Mrs. *See* Cushman, Susan.

Needlework, Miss Cushman's dislike of, 13.
New Haven, reading in, 235.
New Orleans, engagement in, in 1850, 91; visit to, 161; illness in, 245.
Newport, her home in, 224, 251.
Newport Hospital, reading in aid of, 244.
New York, first arrival in, 26; burning of Bowery Theatre, 27; engagement in Park Theatre, 29, 33; performance for Sanitary Fund, 187; readings in, 238; farewell engagement in, 256; ovation, 259 - 265.
Nonconformist, Robert Cushman a, 2.

Ogden, Wm. B., 243, 251.
Ohio, travelling adventures at Springfield and Urbana, 253; letter from Toledo, 254.
"Othello," Miss Cushman plays "Emilia" in, 31.

Paddon, John, her teacher of singing, 19.
Page, W., his portrait of Miss Cushman, 92.
Paget, Sir James, 229, 230.
Palestrina, his bust by Mathieu, 205.
Paris, visits to, 38, 166, 168.
Parker House, residence in, 279 - 284.
Parker, Theodore, his visit to Rome, 160.
Peabody, Miss Elizabeth, reminiscences of Miss Cushman, 139 - 142.
Personal appearance, comments on her, 53, 92, 101, 102; on stage, 89, 151, 152.
Pets, Miss Cushman's, 121 - 131.
Philadelphia, farewell performance in, 265 - 267.
Photograph, Miss Cushman's, by Gutekunst, 92.
Pius IX., 190, 191.

Queen Katharine, a favorite rôle, 71, 73, 212, 215.

Ristori, Madame, acquaintance with, in Italy, 97; meeting with in Boston, 270, 271.
Rogers, Samuel, 57.

Roman climate, 172 – 175.
Roman society, 175, 189.
Rome, Miss Cushman's home in, 112, 131.

"Sallie." *See* Mercer.
Sand, George, Miss Cushman's admiration of, 169.
Sanitary Fund, donation to, 185 – 187.
Saunders, Miss Charlotte, 10.
School-days, 16.
Scotland, travels in, 44.
Seward, Miss Fanny, 189; death of, 201; letters from Miss Cushman to, 196, 200.
Seward, William A., visit to, in 1861, 162; the attempt on his life, 200; letter from Miss Cushman to, 201.
Shakespeare, 34, 62, 139, 215, 218, 260.
"Sheltering Arms," Society of the, Miss Cushman's correspondence with, 157, 158.
Shepherd, R. D., aids Miss Cushman's musical education, 19; meets her in 1858, 161.
Sims, Dr. Marion, consultation with, in Paris, 229.
Simpson, Sir James, 230.
Singer, Miss Cushman's first appearance as public, 22; loss of voice, 22.
Society in Rome, mixed character of, 175.
Somerville, Mrs., visit to, 177.
Spence, Dr., 230.
"Spiridion," exposeat of George Sand's religious views, 169.
Stebbins, Miss, first meeting with, 100; bust of Miss Cushman by, 161.
Stage costume, Miss Cushman's great skill in, 151, 152.
St. Louis, mementoes preserved there, 158; visit to, in 1861, 161.
Stoddard, Richard H., ode to Miss Cushman by, 259 – 262.
Sully's portrait of Miss Cushman, 98.
Switzerland, visit to, 69.

Talfourd, Thomas N., admiration of her acting, 49.
Tennyson, Alfred, 199.
Tremont Theatre, Miss Cushman's first appearance in, 22.
Trollope, Mrs., 70.

Wales, travels through, 159.
Wallack, James, acts with Miss Cushman, 88.
War, excitement among Americans in Rome during, 162, 176.
Ware, Rev. Henry, anecdote concerning, 14.
Washington, visit to, in 1861, 162.
Water-cure, Miss Cushman makes trial of, 226.
Whittier, John G., his poems, 199.
Wight, Isle of, her impressions of, 164.
Winter, William, explanation of her farewells to the stage, 238; obituary notice of Miss Cushman by, 294 – 297.
"Woman's Journal." *See* Howe, Julia Ward.
Wood, Mrs. M. A., sings with Miss Cushman, 20; advises her to go on the stage, 20; letter from, 21.
Woodward family, remarkable musical ability of, 19.
Woolson, Miss, letter from, respecting "Kentucky Belle," 227.

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